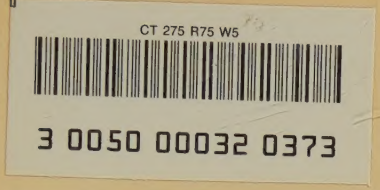
JOHN D.

A PORTRAIT IN OILS

By John K. Winkler

CT
275 Winkler, J. K.
R75
W5 John D.



CAL STATE HAYWARD LIBRARY

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW

Failure to return books on the date due will result in assessment of overdue fees.

DUE AUG 10 '86

RET'D JUL 26 '86

DUE MAY 09 '89

RET'D APR 27 '89

DUE NOV 16 '92

DUE NOV 17 '92

RET'D NOV 23 '92

RET'D NOV 1 1 '93

DUE JUN 03 '96

RET'D JUN 2 596

RET'D JUN 2

CALIFORNIA STATE COLLEGE AT HAYWARD
LIBRARY

JOHN D.

A Portrait in Oils

JOHN D.

A Portrait in Oils

BY

JOHN K. WINKLER

29-14355

New York *Mcmxxix*

THE VANGUARD PRESS

1929

PUBLISHED, JUNE, 1929, BY
THE VANGUARD PRESS

CT
275
R75W5

COPYRIGHT, JUNE, 1929, BY
JOHN K. WINKLER

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CALIFORNIA STATE COLLEGE AT HAYWARD
LIBRARY

To
JOAN AND TONI

John D. Rockefeller and his Standard Oil Trust have provoked a literature and a litigation of their own. In this overwhelming mass of material, Rockefeller the Man is but a shadowy myth. This study seeks chiefly to illumine a rare and astonishing personality. It includes, therefore, only such portions of our subject's long and serried business career as seem essential to our purpose.

The Author.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	A Strange Pilgrim and His Son	11
II.	A Pious Youth Gets a Flying Start	34
III.	A Godly Young Man Strikes Oil	58
IV.	A Refiner Marches Toward Monopoly	80
V.	A Business Genius Makes the World Pay Tribute	102
VI.	The Malevolent Trust—Raking In a Billion	127
VII.	The Benevolent Trust—Ladling Out the Billion	153
VIII.	John D., Jr., a Character Sketch	180
IX.	John D., III, the Clan's Future Chieftain, an Intimate Portrait	209
X.	John D. at Ninety	223

JOHN D.—A PORTRAIT IN OILS

I

A STRANGE PILGRIM AND HIS SON

IN the tremulous years preceding the Civil War a buoyant, boastful man, bearded, keen-eyed, happy-go-lucky, possessing the thews of a bear, door-wide as to shoulders, drove a spanking horse from hamlet to hamlet in the Middle West. He lifted a jovial voice in song—rude and rutty as the roads—and only silenced its great volume when opportunity offered to shoot at a whirring covey of quail or prairie chickens. Then, gleefully, he'd draw forth a shot gun or rifle of beautiful mount and bang away.

Approaching his immediate destination he would halt and slick up his appearance, changing his rough homespun shirt for a white bosomed starched affair and, in lieu of a cravat, inserting a great diamond at the neck. A swallow-tailed coat of latest cut completed a striking ensemble.

Thus attired, he'd flourish into town with a whoop and rein up before post office or hotel.

The pop-eyed citizenry naturally assembled with a rush.

"Howdy, folks," beamed the big, impressive stranger, "fine day. Here's my card," and he ladled out gaudy handbills, reading:

Dr. William A. Rockefeller

THE CELEBRATED CANCER SPECIALIST

HERE FOR ONE DAY ONLY!

All Cases of Cancer CURED Unless Too Far Gone And Then They Can Be Greatly BENEFITED!

Now the celebrated specialist began his spiel. It was a good one. Humor and anecdote were mingled with statistics and subtle warnings against pimples, blackheads, rashes and sores. In those days cancer was the curse of the countryside and the spellbinder was usually able to dispose of a dozen or two bottles of his own decoction at two dollars a bottle, cash in hand. This was for internal use. Dose: a tablespoonful three times a day. There was also a mirific lotion, same price.

So far as could be ascertained at a later day the liquid medicine was compounded of nothing more dangerous than a mixture of such proved old diuretic chemical properties as

acetic potash, balsam copaiba, sweet spirits of nitre and oil cubebs—the whole liberally dowered with aqua or well water.

Like most quack remedies, the concoction was practically harmless. Taken thrice daily, mingled with memories of its inventor and sole disseminator, it may have evoked a spirit of optimism that augured well for any ill.

However, Doc Rockefeller (if you'd known him five minutes you'd just naturally call him either Doc or Bill) had other ways of witching dollars into his pocket. He'd trade horses, shoot at marks, run, wrestle or jump against the best local cap and feathers. Generally, at the conclusion of such impromptu contests, the Doc would be found glued to the greenbacks.

An unusual man was this pre-bellum racketeer: shrewd, swaggering, tricky withal rollicking, generous and a hale fellow. He could reel off yarns that would cause bystanders in bar or lobby to roll upon the floor in glee. He had no weakness for alcohol, but wallowed in every other vice to which country sports of the period were addicted. Everywhere he went the ladies loved him. There is some evidence that he requited their affection.

From this likeable sinner, John D. Rockefeller imbibed his earliest knowledge of business principles. For the horse trading, sport loving quack doctor was John D's. father, William Avery Rockefeller.

In the driblets of autobiography which he has released from time to time, John D. almost humidly acknowledges the value of Doc Rockefeller's teachings.

"To my father I owe a great debt in that he himself trained me to practical ways," he says. "He was engaged in different enterprises. He used to tell me about these things, explaining their significance; and he taught me the principles and methods of business."

A hint of what these principles and methods were was once given by Doc Rockefeller to an Ohio crony: "I cheat my boys every chance I get. I want to make 'em sharp. I trade with the boys and skin 'em and I just beat 'em every time I can. I want to make 'em sharp." It was a complete summary of his code.

According to colloquial stories, handed down through three generations of upstate New Yorkers and Ohioans who *knew the Rockefellers when,* John D. was never a poor struggling country boy in the Horatio Alger

sense. He never knew the biting pinch of abject poverty. His father developed too many ways of picking up the dollars. Doc Rockefeller's home, his clothes, his horses were always finer than those of his neighbors. Doc's favorite stamping ground was Iowa where he loaned his surplus funds. The legal rate of interest in Iowa was twelve per cent, two per cent higher than in Ohio and five per cent more lucrative than in New York.

John D. himself has stated that his father was sufficiently prosperous to set aside $1,000 as a gift to each of his three sons at twenty-one. His own $1,000 was turned over to him at nineteen to enable him to go into business for himself. However, the father reminded: "John, you'll have to pay me interest for the next two years. The rate is ten."

Doc Rockefeller once related with relish how he "skinned" his fledging son during this period. When John was twenty his father told him that he would "give him his time" for $40, cash in hand. This meant that the son would be released from obligation to turn over to his father all his earnings until he attained his majority. Those were the apprenticeship customs of the times. John remarked that the offer was certainly "worth consider-

ing" and later he paid over the $40 to his father.

At the time, 1859, the family lived in Cleveland in a comfortable brick house William A. Rockefeller had built at the corner of Case and Euclid Avenues. The father at once began to collect board money from his son and, when the latter expostulated, turned upon him with the triumphant cry: "You bought your time, didn't you? What you're getting now is your own, ain't it? Well, you have to pay me board." John D. paid.

His mother, though, took his side. The mother was as remarkable in her way as the peremptory freebooter to whom she was married. The best summary one can give of Eliza Davison Rockefeller's character is to write baldly that she differed from her boisterous mate as does noon from midnight. They were totally contrary in temperament and moral outlook.

Nevertheless, Eliza Rockefeller must have possessed a certain love for the loose-tongued rake who stormed her heart and carried her from her father's prosperous farm near Moravia, N. Y., in 1837. For she bore him six children. And, while he was away on his lengthy and mysterious rovings, she bril-

liantly bossed their constantly shifting farmsteads with the aid of a hired man and a hired girl. John D's. mother was a strong, purposeful woman. She reared her family by rule of rod. She believed in the literal Bible, hell fire and damnation, a just God and a redeeming Christ. She "raised her children right" as country folk say, saw that they were respectful and mannerly and attended church and school regularly.

To know a river one must examine its source. The contradictory streams that flow in John D. Rockefeller afford striking explanation of much that has muddied and mystified his colossal life. Does the mother strain appear in Rockefeller, the pious churchman, the great philanthropist, the home loving husband and parent? The father strain in Rockefeller, ruthless business genius, creator of the most powerful monopoly the world has ever known?

Here, indeed, is a puzzle for those who study the whys and wherefores of human behavior. Unfortunately complete data is lacking. For, alone of those prominent among us, John D. Rockefeller's immediate paternal ancestry cannot be traced to final conclusion. Rockefeller's father died as mysteriously as he had lived.

William Avery Rockefeller passed on at a great age, within the present century, in seclusion and undoubtedly under an assumed name. More and more as his sons, John, William and Frank, attained prominence, he slipped into the background. His last public appearance was in 1902. In September of that year he visited John D. at the latter's estate, Forest Hill, in East Cleveland. John D. quietly arranged a reunion with several of the old cronies who had known his father half a century before in Strongsville and Parma, Ohio, farming communities some miles southwest of Cleveland.

"Uncle Joe" Webster, Joe Davis and a half a dozen other ancients appeared. Doc Rockefeller had grown immensely stout and he told his old pals that his feet were bothering him. He was suffering from gout and asthma. But mentally he was the same man. Profane, independent and jovial, his wit was as keen as ever and he poured out stories old and new until the Strongsville men grew tired laughing.

When his old buddies bade him goodby they had, however, learned absolutely nothing of his life or his place of residence. Only one of the guests had the temerity to put the

question squarely. "Say, Doc, where are you living now?"

And the elder Rockefeller's answer, emphasized by a wink and a leer, was typical of the strange man.

"Well, my boy," he replied, "I've been camping close to a lake over there," pointing northwest with a sweep of his ponderous arm, "and let me tell you that lake is chock full of shirt-tail swans, worth $5 apiece in the New York market. It's great."

Immediately after the reunion half a dozen persons saw William A. Rockefeller with his youngest son, Frank, driving through the streets of Cleveland. All described him as enormously fat and unwieldy in his movements. His broadcloth coat with silk faced lapels was thrown back from a low cut waistcoat. From the bosom of his white shirt blazed his ubiquitous diamond. He wore a silk hat at rakish angle and watched Euclid Avenue's passing crowds with sharp interest.

From that moment William Avery Rockefeller passed into the mist. On February 2, 1908, Frank Rockefeller admitted that his father was alive but "his whereabouts concern no one but his immediate family." Frank Rockefeller's statement was prompted by a

newspaper article circumstantially identifying the elder Rockefeller with a quack doctor who had died two years before, at ninety-six, in Illinois. This man had been married since 1855 to the daughter of a Canadian farmer.

John D. was calmly silent. He did not, of course, deny that his father survived his mother many years. Eliza Davison Rockefeller was buried from John D.'s Cleveland home in 1889. She was seventy-five. The burial certificate, based upon information furnished by the family, stated that she was a "widow."

One thing is certain: John D.'s father lived almost to, or beyond, the century mark. And, curiously enough, it is John D.'s ambition to wield the baton over a band playing in his secluded gardens at Pocantico Hills on his hundredth birthday, July 8, 1939. He did have a wager with Dr. H. F. Biggar to play a round of golf that day. But the wager was expunged by Biggar's death three years ago.

If the band does well by "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," John D. will chuckle. For he relishes this old favorite even more than he does "Coming Through the Rye," "Annie Laurie," "Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms" and "Silver

Threads Among the Gold." Since John Yordi, his Swiss valet, developed into a more than passable organist, these fine old tunes often roll through the house, evenings.

Sitting in his lofty gray Georgian mansion called Kijkuit (an ancient Dutch word meaning "Lookout" or more literally "Keep Out") the oil king is supremely confident that he will round out a full century of life, and more. Not long ago, while on one of his daily afternoon motor drives, he directed his chauffeur, Phillips, to stop at the John Dean Rock by the Nepperhan River which flows through his estate. The rock marks the spot where John Dean, a Tory, secreted himself for several weeks in Revolutionary times while he was being hunted by Colonials. John D. walked to the rock, patted its rude surface and roguishly remarked to a companion: "Our initials are the same, this rock and I? Wonder which will last the longer!"

Assuredly this man is a freak of nature, mentally and physically. Twenty odd years ago he looked like a mummy. His skin was as colorless as desert holly. Mystifying digestive maladies had swept away his hair, even the eye lashes and all but a faint wisp of eye

brow. So serious was his condition that at one time John D. was compelled to exist on human milk. Strangely his teeth were not affected by the illness that deprived him of his hair and of his usual diet. He has not a single false tooth. The disease revealed all the strength of his great head, with curious bumps and tightly drawn skin now concealed by a wig. Never tall, John D. in his prime possessed a bull-like neck and powerful shoulders. Still, the head and ears seemed disproportionately large. The eyes were small, glittering, yet curiously stony. They glowed (still do) with a cold fire as though artificially illumined from within.

Without its mask of a moustache the Rockefeller mouth was revealed as a long, narrow slit with downward droops emphasized by deep vertical furrows running the full length of the cheeks. The cheeks were heavy and puffy. The nose alone was distinctive, small, fine, sensitive, rising like a thorn between the jowls. The bald, unmasked Rockefeller struck imaginative observers as: "An Indian with a tomahawk," "dead, like a devil fish," "under his skull cap he seems like an old monk of the inquisition such as one sees in the Spanish picture galleries."

Another comment clings to memory:

"Nothing will ever again bring a smile from the heart to that seamed face."

Well, the face is still seamed. The lines of very old age are there. But Rockefeller has come back and come back smiling. He tackled ill health with the astonishing mastery he had displayed in business and won. Acidulated milk and crackers were his diet for a long period. Much flesh dropped from his frame while Dr. Biggar and associated specialists were experimenting. John D. was as docile as a lamb. Finally the scientists discovered (and this intensified John D's. interest in medical research) that the patient was chemically antipathetic to three varieties of foodstuffs, tomatoes, cucumbers, heavy sweets. These are the only dishes now barred from the Rockefeller cuisine. Otherwise his diet is eclectic. He eats only to live and very sparingly. Cheese and olive oil, once shunned, are now consumed moderately. Two or three spoonsful of olive oil are swallowed each week "to lubricate the joints."

During the period of his apparent decline it was noticeable to those around him that John D. sought to cultivate the sunny side of his nature. One day his joints creaked under the strenuous massaging of Dr. Louis Fechtig,

an osteopath. "Listen to that, doctor," remarked John D. wryly. "They say I control all the oil in the country and I haven't enough even to oil my own joints."

No creature quite like John D. ever lived. He had an eye for profits almost from infancy. Today he maintains flocks of dignified, stately turkeys just to remind himself that the first dollar he ever earned and deposited in a cracked cup on the mantle (at the age of eight) came from his cultivation of turkeys. His mother allowed him all the profits and gave him the curds of the milk with which to feed his charges. "The sight of fine, friendly turkeys gives me enjoyment even now," he says. About the same period young John used to be sent over the hills to buy cordwood. "My father told me not to accept any wood that was pulpy or full of knots," he recalls. "I didn't. I knew how to select good wood and I knew how many feet there were in a cord. We got good wood."

Once he worked for ten days hoeing potatoes for a neighboring farmer. His reward was the princely sum of $3.50. "I saved every penny of that money," he recollects. "But it occurred to me that if I had saved $50 and had it out at seven percent interest, that the

annual interest alone would bring me in as much as I had earned by those ten days of hard labor. So I determined to make money work for me."

Making money work for him became the primal rule of his life. Even today, in retirement, much that he touches turns to gold. At Pocantico he has some of the largest nurseries in the world. He plants as many as ten thousand young trees at a time and sells his surplus at a very fine profit. For instance, hundreds of evergreens are shipped each year to his Lakewood, N. J., estate. John D. keeps careful account and charges himself the full market rate. Each tree pays him a profit of almost two dollars and the Pocantico John D. never permits the Lakewood John D. to receive a few trees gratis!

He records all of these transactions in private ledgers. Eighty-two years ago he set down a record of his first earnings in a small book called "Ledger A." The wrinkled, red volume has been carefully preserved and it is John D.'s choicest treasure. This "man of figures" (as he refers to himself) reads the tiny volume with almost as much devotion as he peruses his Bible.

John D. goes into every project that inter-

ests him with thoroughness and upon a great scale. His passion is road building, tree transplanting, landscape planning. At Pocantico he has literally moved mountains, leveling some hill tops and populating entire hillsides with full grown trees. He has moved trees a hundred feet high, horse chestnuts, spruce, bass wood. Only mature oaks and hickories baffle him. He asserts proudly that his losses in these operations are less than six per cent and proves it by producing records which are kept with mathematical precision.

This institutional person supervises every detail of his baronial estate—one of the most elaborate in the world. It lies two miles north of Tarrytown, N. Y., and includes that Sleepy Hollow famed by Washington Irving as the scene of Ichabod Crane's pursuit by the Headless Horseman. Fifty miles of wide stone roadways traverse its 7,000 acres. There are 150 acres of lawn, so smoothly clipped the grass looks like softest velvet. Four great gardens overwhelm the eye in a glory of multicolored flowers and shrubbery, statuary, fountains, cascades and waterfalls. All are electrically equipped and at night the lights create effects of indescribable beauty.

As one approaches Kijkuit, the manor house,

vista after vista of surpassing gorgeousness unfolds. At the top of the hill there is a burst of river, hill, cloud and great sweep of country. A broad avenue leads to the house, which is built of native rock.

Kijkuit is John D.'s own creation. He himself selected the site for the house and the course of the roads leading to it. He supervised the placing of the stakes and often labored with his workmen until darkness obscured the surveying flags. His plan, worked out in a few days, won over elaborate blueprints of famous architects and landscape authorities. He himself the judge.

His private apartment is at the northwest corner of the mansion, on the third floor. In the late afternoons of clear days he sits before a semi-circular window and watches the sun dip behind the Palisades. Far off to the right rise the grape-tinted Catskills. The shriveled but still active body of the master of Pocantico is perched gnome-like in a great leather arm chair. Revery rules him. And what reveries!

The Rockefeller we are examining is a very different person from the Rockefeller of thirty years ago. That Rockefeller, enveloped in a gale of bitterness, was dour and secretive, avoiding the public gaze.

"John, why don't you answer these slanders?" asked a friend walking with him one day along a wooded path of the Forest Hill estate. "Why do you let people call you a liar, a hypocrite, an unconscionable crook and even worse?"

The president of the Standard Oil Company silently pointed downward. At his feet a worm wriggled along the path. After a moment Rockefeller remarked: "If I step on that worm I will call attention to it. If I ignore it, it will disappear."

The 1929 Rockefeller sits in the sun, calm as the Buddha, confident all his sins have been forgiven. A whimsical, quirky little man distributing dimes and platitudes. Basking in the world-wide approval which has greeted his gifts of almost $750,000,000 to science, religion and education. Serene in the knowledge that he was the first to organize mass production and distribution and lead the expansion that has made yesterday's luxuries today's commonplaces. He regards Standard Oil as the most justifiable institution in industrial history from the point of view of economics, and is proud of his brain child. He does not attempt to conceal his satisfaction when people tell him that *his* trust made the East India and

Hudson Bay companies look like corner groceries.

He believes that history has already brought in its verdict upon him and his works—and he finds the verdict pleasing.

"Most pioneers who have changed the established order have been misunderstood and cruelly persecuted," he remarked recently in private conversation. "My chief regret is that scores of my splendid associates, those who made the Standard Oil Company possible, passed away before it was generally recognized we were working for the benefit of mankind."

In the extraordinary panorama of John D. Rockefeller, his father is the figure that most fascinates. He is the great mystery of John D.'s life. Even the beginnings of William Avery Rockefeller are cloudy.

He first appeared in Richford, Tioga County, N. Y., in the mid thirties of the past century. Richford was a tiny village some twenty-five miles northwest of Binghamton. William's father, Godfrey, had settled there some time before, coming from a hamlet called Mud Creek, Massachusetts. The Rockefellers (or Rockenfellers) were a migratory family, sup-

posedly of German extraction, that had been on American soil for two or three generations.

Godfrey Rockefeller is described as "a shiftless tippler, stunted in stature and mean in spirit," but held to a certain decency by a wife of strength and character. William A., Godfrey's son, arrived in Richford as a peddler. He was then a man of twenty-three or four. For some reason, practical joke or otherwise, he pretended to be deaf and dumb and communication with him had to be carried on by writing or signs.

William always had money and wore the best clothes of any young man in the county. Love of life, unfettered by education, ran riot in him. He had no trade and spurned farm work. He was always eager for a gambling, fishing or hunting carouse and soon was the boon companion of the most riotous men of the community. Even in those days, he disappeared on long trips, always returning with jingling pockets. He returned from one of these journeys in 1837 with a bride, Eliza Davison. It was rumored she had married young Bill Rockefeller over the opposition of her parents. The neighbors took to her at once. In even procession she gave birth to three chil-

dren: Lucy, John Davison, and William. John was born July 8, 1839.

In 1843 William and Eliza Rockefeller moved their family to a farm near her home town of Moravia. Here were born three other children: Mary Ann, and twins, Frank and Frances. The latter died in infancy.

In Moravia William Rockefeller was a leader in all that was reckless and wild in the community. Respectable people classed him as a "dangerous character." Those long and unaccounted for absences from home continued. Some called him a gambler, others a quack doctor. In 1850 three of his closest chums were indicted as members of a gang that operated an "underground horse railroad"—running off horses from various parts of the country. That year Rockefeller took his wife and five children to Owego, N. Y., in the valley of the Susquehanna, and settled them upon a larger farm. In Owego William maintained his reputation as a rover. But he always sent money home and in liberal amounts.

In 1853 the restless Rockefellers moved to Strongsville, Ohio, fifteen miles from Cleveland, and the following year to another farming settlement called Parma, seven miles from Cleveland. Now the elder Rockefeller

branched out as a quack doctor and carried his celebrated cancer "cure" far and wide. In Strongsville and Parma the legends of "Old Bill" or "Doc" are identical with those of Richford, Moravia and Owego. On his rare visits home he created a profound impression by his clothes, his good horse and his crack shooting. The neighbors called him "a rippin' good one" and, though they winked slyly at his occupation and morals, agreed that he was a "good fellow," jolly and on occasion generous.

John, the eldest son, had grown into a balanced sort of boy, grave, quiet, a good listener. Although he "took after" his mother in manner and disposition, John delighted his father by his ability to earn and save small sums. He never responded very warmly to the saltiest of his father's anecdotes, but doted upon his sire's vivid yarns of sharp trading and business bargains into which he had stumbled. In these tales Doc, of course, always got the better of the other fellow.

Eliza Rockefeller planned to send John to college. Her husband was against the idea. He didn't believe in too much book learning. However, he bent to his wife's will sufficiently to give John a modicum of the higher education, as represented by Central High School

in Cleveland. In the fall of 1854 John left the house on the plank road at Parma, obtained room and board at the home of an estimable woman in Cleveland for a dollar a week and enrolled in the high school. A schoolmate was a gay youngster named Mark Hanna. Another was Laura Celestia Spelman (correct), plump, brown-eyed daughter of a prosperous merchant.

At school John Rockefeller was not brilliant but he was diligent and thorough. However, he was itching to get into business and, after a year, welcomed his father's suggestion that he attend a commercial college in Cleveland for a few months. The school taught bookkeeping and some of the fundamentals of commerce. All summer long, in 1855, the sixteen-year-old boy slaved away. Then he started out to find a job.

II

A PIOUS YOUTH GETS A FLYING START

"NO Help Wanted" signs decorated the doors of Cleveland storekeepers and merchants in early September, 1855, when sixteen-year-old John Rockefeller set out to seek employment for his budding talents. It was a hard year in the West. For days and weeks the youth tramped the streets, grave, self-centered, tenacious in his quest.

Physically, he appealed to the eye. He was of good height, with a frame that gave promise of filling into robust manhood, straight gray-blue eyes and thick light hair parted upon the left of a wide brow.

He impressed one as "different," in some indefinable way, from most boys. Without seeming in the least "sissified" he was "steady" and "good." His voice was low and easy on the ear. It was often raised in prayer and hymn in a small mission church—Erie Street Baptist —with which he had affiliated during his year

in Cleveland. Already he was looked upon as an earnest laborer in the Lord's vineyard.

Young Mr. Downie, the minister, spoke of the serious-minded youth affectionately and John served as clerk, without compensation, to the board of trustees. At Central High he had been nicknamed Deacon. The appellation pleased him. His gregarious instincts, apparently, were satisfied at the mission, completely, and cheaply.

Not for John the rowdy outlets of most bantam cocks of his age: pool shooting, cigarette smoking, bravado beer drinking. Let misguided sinners ogle the girls and indulge in the disgusting close harmony of barber shop ballads. He memorized passages of Scripture and etherealized his nature with "Beulah Land," "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere" and other fine old hymns. He could carry a tune, having a natural ear for music. Nights, while roisterers were rolling the bones or bidding up a pair of jacks, John was quietly at work on the church accounts, adding, subtracting, balancing.

The lad, could prospective employers but have realized it, was uniquely equipped for a business career. Already he had a fair grasp of the laws and methods of commerce. Judi-

ciously and without a slip he had negotiated many small loans for his father. He always saw that good collateral was produced and that his father received the legal limit of ten per cent interest. The landlady and some fellow lodgers thought John was exacting an outrageous rate and told him so. Rockefeller, however, held that money was worth what it would bring.

This, then, was the youth who, at the age of sixteen years and two months, set out to plant his feet upon the business ladder. But jobs were scarce. Young Rockefeller returned each evening to his dollar-a-week boarding house, footsore and discouraged. He hesitated to go back to the country.

His father, William A. Rockefeller, who roved so mysteriously, had installed his wife, two daughters, and John D.'s younger brothers, William and Frank, in a comfortable frame house in the hamlet of Parma, some miles south of Cleveland. John did not want to go home. Instinctively he recognized that the city was the place for a smart boy. He had the dollar itch. Determined above all else upon becoming rich, he realized that Cleveland was the place where one could make good bargains, save money and permit it to work for its

master. So he determined to make one last try at a job.

He canvassed the docks of the bustling Lake Erie port. Everywhere there were picturesque evidences of activity. But ship yards, granaries, coal companies, all returned laconic negatives to his patient: "Good morning, sir. Do you want a boy?"

Finally a member of a wholesale forwarding concern replied gruffly:

"Dunno, sonny. Come back after I have had my dinner and you may get a chance."

Dinner was the noon meal. The young job seeker was again in the warehouse office at 12:15. Half an hour later he was hired as errand boy, sub-clerk and general handy man. Salary was not mentioned.

The name of the firm was Hewitt and Tuttle. The date, since observed with tender reverence in the Rockefeller household, was September 26, 1855. Messrs. Hewitt and Tuttle were placid men. But their pulses might have been stimulated somewhat if they could have foreseen that their now office boy would, forty-five years later, have an income of about a million a week.

This first humble job was the most fortunate connection the fledgling Rockefeller could

have made. Hewitt and Tuttle owned dwellings, warehouses, office buildings. The firm shipped by rail, canal and lake. It handled grain, produce, coal—almost every commodity that passed east-west and the other way about through an increasingly important port. Shipping charges and damage claims had to be allocated among three carriers. What more fascinating environment for a sharp boy who would keep his eyes and wits about him! This particular boy was one to take full advantage of his opportunities.

Looking rearward, John D. estimates as the most vital of his life the two and a half years passed in the Hewitt and Tuttle warehouse on the Cleveland docks. He learned everything and forgot nothing—business management and finance, systematic maintenance of office records, handling of customers.

Hewitt and Tuttle soon perceived that they had stumbled upon a treasure. However, these canny business men were sufficiently versed in the wiles of trade not to tell him so. On January 1, 1856, Tuttle merely handed the quick, active youth fifty dollars for his fourteen weeks' work and informed him that his duties were to be enlarged. He was to become assistant bookkeeper at twenty-five dollars a month.

Some time later the $2,000-a-year bookkeeper resigned and Rockefeller was given the place—but not the salary. Now the eighteen-year-old boy had a position of authority and responsibility. And now he first learned the value of negotiation. He was not a "mixer," yet he got what he went after. He developed surprising ability to soothe complaints and to win what he wanted by soft methods. Doubtless he had never heard of Cecil Rhodes but the Empire Builder's ruling maxim also became his: "It is better to deal with a man than fight with him." He demonstrated the workability of the principle for Hewitt and Tuttle and he was to prove it for himself in his subsequent career, time and again.

"I checked up every bill that came in," says John D. proudly, "and made it my business to see that my employers were not cheated. I recall that there was one captain who was always putting in claims for damages to shipments and I decided to investigate. I examined all the invoices, bills of lading and other documents and found this captain had presented entirely unwarranted claims. He never did it again."

One day Rockefeller was in a nearby office when a plumber presented a bill. Without

even glancing at the lengthy document, the boss turned to his bookkeeper and ordered the bill paid. A day or two before John D. had discovered several mistakes in the same plumber's accounting. This casual method of doing business shocked the boy Rockefeller and he made up his mind that such methods were intolerable and would never be indulged by him.

In his personal expenditures Rockefeller squeezed every cent and saved the cent. He paid out not a penny without cautious deliberation, perhaps prayer. Reading no books save his ledgers, attending no balls, finding his social life inexpensively in church and Sunday school, he dreamed and schemed day and night, with money the one object of those dreams and schemes.

William A. Rockefeller heartily approved of his son's sedulous life. Though not a churchgoer himself, Old Bill realized to the full the advantages of a pious cloak. The father was still the guiding force in his son's life. In the spring of 1856, Doc Rockefeller came to live with John while looking about for a city homesite for his family. There is no indication the crafty freebooter ever attended a service at the mission but, nevertheless, he was tickled when John, before his eighteenth birthday, was

elected a trustee of the Erie Street church. Doc evidently remained some time in Cleveland. The 1857 Cleveland city directory lists John as a bookkeeper, home 35 Cedar Avenue, and William Rockefeller, same address, as a "physician."

To this day, John D. speaks of his early struggles with open emotional ducts. His eyes often brim at family gatherings when he produces his first account book, the treasured Ledger A, and reads from the venerated volume the record of his early intakes and outlays. He portrays himself, invariably, as a poverty-stricken boy. Some items, for example, with John D.'s homiletic comment, run:

"September 26, 1855 – January 1, 1856, received wages fifty dollars. Beginning January 1, 1856, received $25 per month. November, 1855 – April, 1856, boarded myself. For clothing paid $9.09. My clothes were not of the most fashionable cut. I bought them of a ready-made clothier. But they were such as I could afford and it was a great deal better than buying clothes I couldn't pay for. I note but one piece of extravagance—a pair of fur gloves for $2.50. I ought to have bought mittens. During four months, in which I earned one hundred dollars and out of which I lived and

saved some money, I also gave over five and one-half dollars to Christian work.

"Here are the items, starting from November 25, 1855, when I gave ten cents to foreign missions. Then come these items: to Mr. Downie, one of our young ministers, ten cents. Pew rent—we called them 'slips'—one dollar. December 16, 1855, Sunday school, five cents. For a present to Mr. Farrar, the Sunday school superintendent, twenty-five cents. Five Points Mission, New York, twelve cents. For a little religious paper called the *Macedonian,* ten cents. Present for teacher Sked, twenty-five cents. I now turn to January, 1856. On the thirteenth of that month I find I had something left over for good work. I find these items: missionary work, six cents; church poor, ten cents—all on one Sunday. February 3, I see that I gave ten cents to the church poor; and also to foreign missions ten cents. Going to March 2, I gave ten cents to the church poor. The next day, pew rent, one dollar. March 16, foreign missions, ten cents. March 21, one dollar to the Y. M. C. A. And all this time, mind you, I was not only paying my living expenses, clothes, food and all, but saving money."

Ledger A is the totem of the Rockefeller

family, the symbol of which it is most proud. The Rockefeller seedlings, as they have made their bow to the sunlight during the past half century, have been taught to reverence Ledger A. On occasion the Lord of Oil himself opens the yellowed little volume before the usually awed eyes of his grandchildren.

It was a grandson who dissolved one such solemn ceremony into decidedly un-standardized laughter. From a wealth of newly acquired, tutor-taught knowledge, this weanling placed an accusing finger upon an entry in the ledger and pointed out:

"Grandpop, everybody that knows anything spells toothbrush with two o's!"

Grandpop explained, with many a chuckle, that at the time he wrote "toothbrush" he was too busy checking grain on a Cleveland dock to mind his o's and u's. But, he assured his youthful critic, Grandpop got full value out of that t-o-u-thbrush. John D.'s children and their children (and this will be true of the generations to follow) have been taught that Ledger A and what it represents is the only honorable signpost to peace and happiness, virtue and justice. Economy and Godliness!

The story Ledger A tells is touching. But is it truthful? Let's see. John D.'s father had

plenty of money, no matter by what devious devices acquired. Doc had a reputation of being generous with his children. Unless Doc Rockefeller's "smarting up" process encompassed chucking his eldest son out on his own at sixteen, John was always privileged to draw upon the home exchequer. Then, too, there was the not inconsiderable sum the youth had saved, since his turkey-raising experiment in Moravia, doing chores and odd jobs for neighbors and others. It's all rather puzzling.

Yet there is nothing of brag or bounce about John D. today, rolling the items in Ledger A under his tongue, as though morsels of consuming sweetness. His purpose is probably to demonstrate that only the righteous prosper. John D. firmly believes that he prospered because he was righteous. He contemplates with steady serenity the saving grace which lies beyond. We may puzzle at times to make out clearly just how John D. reads his Bible. But many a farmer has plowed around stumps and taken off a very fair crop for his pains.

In this adolescent, penny-pinching period indication is not lacking that our subject yielded occasionally to those emotions which have been known to sway even the most exemplary. Handed down in the Ohio Rockefeller legend,

the name of Melinda Miller euphoniously appears as John D.'s first sweetheart. Melinda was the comely daughter of a Strongsville farmer. When Doc Rockefeller moved his family from Strongsville to Parma, Melinda went along to assist Eliza Rockefeller with the work. She was not exactly a hired girl, though she received wages. She dined at the family table and her status as a social equal was never questioned.

John was working in Cleveland but came home frequently. He and Melinda often "walked out" together. Early marriages were the fashion then, and sage heads nodded over the possibility of a match. The rumors reached the Miller farm in Strongsville. Mrs. Miller hitched up a buggy, drove to Parma and took her daughter home, peremptorily. According to stories passed down the years, Mrs. Miller raised a good-sized row over the idea of her daughter's "throwing herself away" upon a young man of such uncertain prospects as the eldest Rockefeller boy. Melinda later married one of the Websters, "Young Joe," and as late as 1907 light heartedly recalled her friendship with John D.

Then there was Emma Saunders, a Cleveland belle, whom he met at the Erie street mis-

sion. They shared cake and lemonade at sedate church parties and again tongues wagged. She sought to sponsor him at outside social affairs but found "bringing out John" too difficult a task. He wanted to save his pennies and confined his social activities to the church.

Throughout his life John D.'s eyes have never been held so close to his ledgers that a wellturned ankle could not intrigue him. Under different circumstances, he might have proved as sensitive to the charms of womankind as two of his favorite Old Testament heroes, David and Solomon.

John D. has always puzzled and fascinated women. The ladies love the aura of power. Most women possess an enviable ability to idealize men of accomplishment. Witness the conquests of the bald Caesar, the diminutive Napoleon. John D., one feels, could have been equally successful if the terrific strain of his acquisitive years had afforded time for indulgence in the lighter, aromatic engagements of life—not that one could ever imagine him strumming a guitar under the casement of a lady fair.

With the lifting of his business burdens, his instinct for feminine society again flared forth.

And women responded. I well remember, in 1918, the dimpled denial of an estimable and unattached woman of middle age that John D., then but three years widowed, had offered his hand. I never saw a person appear more pleased.

Seductive rumors of the same nature have also arisen from Rockefeller's warm friendship with Mrs. Ira Warner, widow of a sugar magnate. The charming Mrs. Warner is his closest woman friend. She has been a house guest at the Casements, the Rockefeller winter home in Ormond, Florida, and at Pocantico. They motor, golf and play John D.'s favorite game, numerica. Rockefeller's semi-open Simplex or Lincoln car is often observed in the driveway of Mrs. Warner's home in Bridgeport.

John D. enjoys playing golf with women—the younger and prettier the better. When he executes a good stroke, he does a funny little half-Charleston, bending his left knee and shuffling to time and remarks: "You ought to kiss my hand for that." On occasion a coy and fluttery flapper has been persuaded to accept the gage. Then the Oil King beams with delight. Hidden in him, deep down, there is a decided strain of romanticism.

To get back to the early years. At eighteen John was not only a valued employe of Hewitt and Tuttle but he had established a credit outside his business circle. He won his trusteeship in the mission church as a reward for saving it.

The tiny edifice was threatened with disaster because of the imminent foreclosure of a $2,000 mortgage. The creditor was a deacon of the church but his heart was flinty. Consternation was caused one Sunday morning by announcement from the pulpit that the full amount of the mortgage would have to be raised shortly or the mission would be sold out.

Everyone was in a panic—everyone save practical-minded young John Rockefeller. He stationed himself at the door and, as the brothers and sisters filed out, asked each how much he and she would and could contribute toward paying the debt. He held a small account book and his pencil was poised. There was something in his manner that meant business. Not a member escaped without pledging a definite amount, from a few cents to a dollar a week. The $2,000 was on hand within a few months.

"That was my first experience as a beggar," says John D. "I was proud of my success."

It may well be imagined how valuable a bookkeeper Rockefeller had made himself to Hewitt and Tuttle by this time. January 1, 1858, the firm offered him a salary of $700. He held out for $800. The parties were still wrangling over the extra hundred dollars in March. It would have paid Hewitt and Tuttle to have dowered him with many times the amount in dispute. For opportunity came to John D. to go into the commission business on his own and he seized it. Hewitt and Tuttle paid dear. The meek-mannered young bookkeeper became a rival and a dangerous one.

The offer came from Maurice B. Clark, a young Englishman. He was anxious to establish a business and was in search of partners. Older by twelve years than Rockefeller, Clark was cut from the same bolt. Without a penny or a friend, he had landed in Boston in 1847, and had worked his way west. He had been a teamster, woodchopper, man-of-all work. In Cleveland he had been employed by various firms, studied nights, saved money. He had $2,000 to put into a commission business and wanted partners with equal amounts to contribute.

John D. possessed, he admits, almost $1,000 (again explodes the poverty-stricken boy

myth). He went to his father for advice. Crafty Doc Rockefeller talked with Clark, approved of the partnership, and advanced his son the $1,000 he had intended giving him on his twenty-first birthday.

Clark had enlisted another partner in George W. Gardner, a full-blooded, jovial young man, scion of an honorable and ancient family.

In April, 1858, Clark, Gardner and Company, produce commission merchants, went into business on the Cleveland docks. John Rockefeller was the junior partner. He was three months short of his nineteenth birthday and he had absorbed everything there was to absorb about the commission and forwarding business, and a great deal more besides.

Rockefeller took charge of the finances and the books. Clark and Gardner attended to the buying and selling. The project was a success from the start. The young firm did a gross business of almost $500,000 the first year. Each partner's profits were $2,200.

The business expanded rapidly. Soon it was necessary to borrow money. John D. negotiated the first loan from Truman P. Handy, a local banker. With trembling eagerness he presented himself at the bank and supplied particulars of the firm's business.

"How much do you require?" asked Mr. Handy.

"Two thousand dollars."

"All right, Mr. Rockefeller, you can have it. Just give me your own warehouse receipts; they're good enough for me."

John D. left the bank walking on air. "Just think of it," he muses, "a bank had trusted me for $2,000! I felt that I was now a man of importance in the community."

The firm continued to grow and needed money constantly. The junior partner proved an adroit borrower and bargainer. He always produced the necessary funds, though often it was a mystery where he dug up the money. One day, a wealthy business man came into the office and asked for Mr. Rockefeller. Clark explained that he was out. "Mr. Clark," said the visitor, "you may tell Mr. Rockefeller, when he comes in, that I think I can use the $10,000 he wants to invest with me for your firm. I have thought it all over."

"Good God!" cried Clark, involuntarily, "we don't want to invest $10,000. John is out right now trying to borrow $5,000 for us."

It was one of John D.'s subtle little tricks, telling the merchant that he and his partners had $10,000 to invest. But the joke of it was

that, even after Clark had let the cat out of the bag, his firm got the $5,000.

"Oh, John was the greatest borrower you ever saw!" exclaimed Clark admiringly, relating the incident in after years.

John D. found his father a tougher twig when it came to borrowing. Now and then Doc would drop into the firm's office on Merwin street and say to his son: "If you need money I can let you have a little. But the rate is ten and I'll have to call it back whenever I need it." John D. always accepted the offer. But, just when he required the money most, his slick sire would again stroll in and say: "My son, I find I have got to have that money."

John D. would skirmish about and produce the coin. "Father was just testing me," judges Rockefeller. "After I paid him he would hold the money a little while, then offer it to me again." Bill Rockefeller's peculiar cat- and-mouse methods did not appear so humorous then as now.

John D. watched the business like a mother hen guarding her eggs at hatching time. He was always first to arrive, last to leave. He sat on a high stool before a tall, old-fashioned desk and never complained unless someone jarred his arm and caused him to splotch ink.

He and Clark were invariably in accord but Gardner was rather an alien element in the firm. The latter believed in mixing pleasure with business.

Gardner, later commodore of the Cleveland Yacht Club, had a run-in with Rockefeller one day over the question of spending money for fun. He and three friends had purchased a second-hand yacht for $2,000. One Saturday afternoon they were about to sail over to Put-in-Bay for an outing. Leaving the office, Gardner noticed Rockefeller bending over his books with an expression that was becoming habitually sad and tense.

"John, we're going for a sail. Come along," invited Gardner. "Get your mind off business for a while."

The junior partner looked up with cold, inimical eyes and grated:

"George Gardner, you are the most extravagant young man I ever knew. You are just barely getting a start in life, and yet you own an interest in a yacht. You are injuring your credit at the banks—your credit and mine. Everybody will be looking on you as a spendthrift and the first thing you know you'll be wrecking our business. No, I won't go on your yacht—I don't ever want to see it!"

The venomous outburst surprised Gardner. But he remarked quietly:

"All right, John. I see there are certain things on which you and I probably never will agree. I think you like money beyond all else in the world, and I don't. I prefer to have a little fun along with business."

Years later, when he was mayor of Cleveland, Commodore Gardner related an anecdote illustrative of Rockefeller's craving for saving. Clark, Gardner and Company had invested its entire fortune, some $40,000, in grain for shipment to Buffalo, at that time the grain market for the Great Lakes.

Inasmuch as the weather was not threatening, Rockefeller suggested they take a chance, ship without insurance and save one hundred and fifty dollars. Clark and Gardner reluctantly agreed. The vessel embarked with cargo uninsured. That night a vicious storm raged over Lake Erie. When Gardner got to the office next morning, John D. was pacing the floor, pallid. "Let's take out insurance right away," he quavered, "we still have time—if the boat hasn't been wrecked by now."

Gardner went uptown and paid the premium. When he got back to the office he found Rockefeller clutching a telegram announcing the safe

arrival of the grain carrier in Buffalo. The hundred and fifty dollars had been wasted. That afternoon Rockefeller went home ill.

All this time John D. was handling money as he had handled it when a boy chopping wood. He put his dollars away to work for him. He spent as he had spent when his income was $25 a month, with minute attention to every cent, watching what it cost to eat and drink and clothe himself, estimating the proportion he could afford to give to church and charity—and always putting a little aside.

"I never placed my head upon the pillow at night," he says, "without reminding myself that my success might be but temporary. I tried to teach myself not to get puffed up with any foolish notions."

It was not to be expected that young men whose outlook, temperament and character were so contrary as George Gardner on one hand and Maurice Clark and Rockefeller, on the other, could team for any long period. In the second year of the Civil War, Gardner withdrew from the firm. This notice appeared in the Cleveland *Herald* of December 1, 1862:

"M. B. Clark and John D. Rockefeller, late of Clark, Gardner and Company, will continue

the produce business under style and firm of Clark and Rockefeller, at warehouse recently occupied by Clark, Gardner and Company, Nos. 39, 41, 43, and 45 River Street."

The war boomed business enormously for the young merchants. By this time John D. had demonstrated that he had the instinct for opportunities, the courage to seize them, though they might be far larger than the means at his command, the power to persuade men to lend him money, the patience to stick by enterprises until they had justified his faith.

Thus, we see the Rockefeller of 1861—frugal, calculating, money-bent, cautious in trade yet daring, quick to seize yet ready to wait, and withal "good"—a steady attendant at church, serious, eschewing all amusements which might be called frivolous, the theatre, cards, the dance.

John D. was twenty-two when the boys in blue went marching away for four battle-wrung years. He did not march with them. He was never suspected of disloyal sentiments; he simply kept his head. He was slowly but surely making money and getting his financial feet firmly planted beneath him for a spring at whatever enterprise should promise most.

Oil had been struck in Pennsylvania and was gushing from the ground in thousands of barrels daily.

Here was a smart young man's opportunity.

John D. jumped at it.

III

A GODLY YOUNG MAN STRIKES OIL

IN the early sixties, about as raucous and as rowdy an arena as the world provided for the survey of human nature in the raw was a narrow strip of northwestern Pennsylvania—scarcely fifty miles in length—known as the Oil Regions. A new industry was in birth throes. Chemists had discovered that crude petroleum, hitherto skimmed from the creeks by Indians and lumbermen and sold in lieu of Nujol, could profitably be employed as a luminant and a lubricant. Edwin Drake drilled the first well and struck oil in August, 1859.

Then the stampede was on with a vengeance. Nothing, with the possible exception of the California gold rush of '49, exceeded it in frenzy. Clutching at fortune, all the Bret Harte characters in America headed for the Titusville strike. Dudes, lease hounds, wildcatters, prospectors, whiskey vendors, gamblers, wild women, gay girls. It was no house party at Elsie Dinsmore's. Nor a sewing bee about the fireside. But a mining camp, rough,

drunken and hectic. Oil towns, forlorn, desolate but artificially gay, mushroomed out of the mud over night.

Fortunes were won and lost by the minute. The times produced such oddities as "Coal Oil Johnny" Steele who made and dissipated $1,500,000 in two years and then settled to a life of frugality and industry. Oil sold at twenty dollars a barrel at the beginning of 1860 and at ten cents in December, 1861—at eight dollars a barrel in 1863 and down to three dollars in 1865. Whether the pioneer drills brought in gushers or dry-holes determined supply and price. Many superstitious wildcatters employed witch hazel twigs, clairvoyants and other bizarre methods of locating oil.

To this pirate camp of oil and whiskey came John D. Rockefeller. The young commission merchant of Cleveland was prosperous. He wore a custom fashioned suit that must have cost every penny of fifty dollars. His voice was like Cordelia's, "ever soft, gentle and low." His manner was humble, his tread light. He used two ears and one tongue in strict proportion.

Few of the motley crew, among whom he moved, were attracted to him. Yet there was

something impelling about his personality. Men confided in him without exactly knowing why. He was anything but a hail fellow, this sleek young Ohioian, yet he had a way about him. He assimilated details as a sponge sucks up water.

He watched the tyrannous teamsters cracking cruel blacksnake whips and profanely urging their horses over the rude roads to the nearest railroad termini where they dumped their barrels of oil and exacted huge profits for the cartage. He observed the freshets, created by cutting dam chutes, that floated barges and flatboats down shallow Oil Creek from Titusville to the mouth of the Allegheny, saw many of these smash against the new bridge pier at Oil City and paint the river green with petroleum.

Nothing escaped the cold, clutching eyes of the young man from Cleveland. He could sit in the lobby of a crude hotel, hastily constructed of rough unplaned hemlock, tap his foot to the rude "hoedowns" of oil adventurers and their soiled doves, wriggling to the tune of "Opera Reel," "Money Musk," "Chase the Squirrel" or "Crooked S." Yet, at ten o'clock, he'd be in his bunk or bed (sometimes a hay

pile in the barn). He carried a worn Bible in his grip and read it daily.

Petroleum Centre was the hell hole of the Oil Regions, a town that had leaped in a month from a population of half a hundred to thousands. If you weren't a thug or a gambler, you were rather out of your element in Petroleum Centre. It was the town's boast that its dance hall girls were the classiest in the country.

Each merry Magdalen had a boudoir of her own and enjoyed the luxury of a basin and a heater for warming water. Men who did not dally with such alluring prospects were curious anachronisms in Petroleum Centre.

John D. Rockefeller was such. No belle of those red nights and blue mornings could boast that John D. was ever moved to seize her in his arms and tread a wild quadrille. The velutinous Rockefeller was of more tempered metal. His mistress was money. He moved calmly and without fear among the thieves and the thugs, the gamblers and the hand maidens of Venus. His feet were stalwartly planted in the path of rectitude.

He allied himself with the "decent element" that, in every camp of the region, was striving to establish some sort of social order. He

thoroughly approved when a committee of Rouseville vigilantes—Dr. Parkhursts of the period—cut adrift a boat load of whiskey vendors and prostitutes at the height of a noisy revel. In the morning the befuddled merry-makers found themselves twenty miles away, floating down the Allegheny towards Pittsburgh.

On his frequent trips to the Oil Regions, Rockefeller worshipped often at the first church built in Petroleum Centre. The church fund was raised by James S. McCray, who was enjoying an income of five dollars a minute from a well struck on his hillside farm. McCray collected the money for the church in cash, $6,500. He entrusted the wad of greenbacks to his brother-in-law for safekeeping. Next morning, in the brother-in-law's room, there was a very strong smell of chloroform and a very sick brother-in-law. In the dance halls there had been an all-night celebration and it was reported that exactly $6,500 worth of wine was opened and consumed. Jim McCray made the loss good and the church was built.

Fresh from such a setting and with first-hand knowledge of conditions in "Oil-Do-

rado," Rockefeller, in his mid-twenties, decided to hazard his future in the oil industry. He felt that the refiner, rather than the producer or shipper, would be king.

In 1862, Rockefeller and his partner, Maurice B. Clark, had cleared a profit of $17,000 each from their commission business. Instead of pouching the tidy sum, the young merchants had invested part of their surplus in a small refinery. Their partner was an Englishman, Samuel Andrews, a mechanical genius who had developed a process of cleansing petroleum by the use of sulphuric acid.

The lure of oil had induced many men in Cleveland to take a flyer in a refinery. By 1865 half a hundred crude, evil smelling plants were strewn along the banks of Lake Erie, the Cuyahoga river and creeks known as Walmouth and Kingsbury Runs. These refineries were housed in flimsy shacks. Though almost two hundred miles from the wells, Cleveland was geographically destined to become a refining centre. The growing city commanded the western market and enjoyed transportation east by lake, canal and two trunk railroads.

The process of refining oil was simple. Little apparatus was required beyond a copper

worm, a cast iron still, and a couple of tin or zinc lined tanks. Naturally the business attracted a great many visionaries. But there was nothing visionary about Clark and Rockefeller. From the time Andrews erected the first little refinery on the side of a hill, the partners, Rockefeller especially, watched the business like hawks.

John D. saw his way to riches through the new black gold. Gradually he gave more of his time and energy to the refinery than to the commission business. He worked harder than a day laborer. A mania for saving possessed him. Not a drop of oil must be wasted, not a rivet or bung go uncounted or unaccounted for. "Pay a profit to nobody" became his motto. He went to Oil Creek and purchased his own crude. He made his own barrels, did his own hauling and loading. With Andrews' expert assistance, the Clark and Rockefeller plant utilized by-products which other refineries discarded. No middleman cut into the profits. They erected storage tanks, wood, then iron, bought oil when it was cheap and sold when dear. Oil became Rockefeller's hobby, then his passion.

Nothing lightened the gravity of his countenance save news of a good bargain. When a

cargo of oil was secured below the market price, he would dance deliriously about the office and sometimes throw his hat in the air. On one occasion, in a transport of delight, he unwittingly jumped upon his hat and ruined it. Sadly he went forth to purchase new headgear.

William Rockefeller, younger by two years than John, was given a job in the refinery and sent to the Oil Regions to make purchases. Under the rigorous tutelage of John, William proved an apt pupil. Though he was to follow faithfully in John's footsteps throughout his life, William differed widely in disposition. He was full of fun and enjoyed a good story. His nature was affectionate and those with whom he came into contact grew fond of him.

Brother William soon became a valuable coadjutor. Not so the youngest brother, Frank. Fired with martial ardor, Frank had enlisted in the Federal army at the outbreak of the Civil War. He told the enrollment officers he was eighteen, though three years younger. John bitterly opposed Frank's enlistment and refused to lend him $75 for his equipment. Frank secured the loan elsewhere. This was the first overt act in a feud between the brothers that continued, with alternate periods of peace and discord, until Frank Rockefeller's

death half a century later. So bitter at one time was the strife that Frank removed the bodies of his children from the family plot in Cleveland. "No one of my blood," asserted Frank, "will ever rest upon land controlled by that monster, John D. Rockefeller."

Doc Rockefeller, the father, was still a man of mystery. The companionable man, whose means of support were puzzling, dropped in on the family several times a year. On these occasions John either withdrew or added $500 or $1,000 to his personal account. Once Bill Rockefeller mentioned in an offhand way that he was making Philadelphia his headquarters. Later an acquaintance, who was going to Philadelphia on business, asked John for his father's address. John replied that he had forgotten it. "Get it from your mother when you go home at noon," requested the acquaintance.

In the afternoon, just before his train left, the inquirer dropped into Clark and Rockefeller's office again. "Have you got that address for me?" he asked. John D. flushed and mumbled that he had forgotten to mention the matter to his mother.

As the profits of the Andrews refinery multiplied, Rockefeller's desire for wealth became an overmastering passion. Often he told

Clark: "Maurice, I am bound to be rich, ***bound*** to be rich, BOUND to be rich."

Cautious, yet daring, the young man slaved far into the night over his ledgers.

"I knew where I stood at the close of every business day," says John D. proudly. "I charted my course by figures, nothing but figures. I never felt the need of scientific knowledge, have never felt it. A young man who wants to succeed in business does not require chemistry or physics. He can always hire scientists. No, he should study figures, figures, figures and apply them to his business. What does he intend to sell or manufacture and how many will buy his product? Let him first take paper and pencil and study his market and its possibilities. Figures come first, always."

During these rising years, young Rockefeller renewed friendship with a young woman to whom he had been attracted at Central High School. She was Laura Celestia Spelman, daughter of H. B. Spelman, a prosperous merchant. "Cettie" Spelman was short, plump, with dark hair and brown eyes full of life and fire. She was quiet, strong and possessed clear business judgment. At high school she had

taken commercial courses, a rare thing for a girl in those days. Like John Rockefeller she was a devout churchgoer.

Graduating from the high school, she went to college in Worcester, Massachusetts. She was twenty when she returned. Despite her father's comfortable income, she became a teacher in the Cleveland public schools. Her first class was the A grammar grade in the Brownell street school, now known as the East Fourteenth street school. In four years she had risen to the post of assistant principal.

The junior partner of Clark and Rockefeller called frequently at the Spelman home and discussed his increasing business burdens with the daughter of the household. "Her judgment was always better than mine," says John D., surprisingly. "She was a woman of great sagacity. Without her keen advice, I would be a poor man."

Naturally, so great a treasure could not be permitted to escape. Cettie Spelman became Mrs. John D. Rockefeller on September 8, 1864. The groom was twenty-five years and two months old to the day; the bride one day lacking twenty-five. She was a member of the Plymouth Congregational Church but, after her marriage, joined the Erie Street, now the

Euclid Avenue, Baptist church. Here John D. taught a Sunday school class. Often his bride sat in the background and adoringly looked on as her pious mate aided struggling young sinners to the light.

The bridal pair set up housekeeping in a two-story brick house on a Cleveland side street. Their first set of dishes has been carefully preserved and often today John D. handles them lovingly. The young Rockefellers kept no servant. The bride's thrift, economy, unassuming domesticity delighted her husband.

The marriage was a perfect fusion. The Spelmans were of Puritan stock, undiluted. Laura Rockefeller's parents were active abolitionists and had operated a branch of the underground railway by which negroes from Tennessee and Kentucky made their way into the Middle West. John D.'s bride looked with horror upon card playing and the liquor traffic. As her young ones grew she had them join a pioneer prohibition society called the Loyal Legion, and the evils of rum were drummed into their impressionable heads at weekly meetings in the Rockefeller or neighbors' homes.

Five children were born to John and Laura Rockefeller in ten years: Bessie, who died in

France in 1906 at forty, wife of Prof. Charles Strong; Alice, who died in infancy; Alta, now Mrs. E. Parmalee Prentice; Edith, divorced wife of Harold F. McCormick; and an only son, John D., Jr., who was born in 1874.

Tracing down the years, one finds the Rockefellers invariably fortunate in their choice of wives. Such was assuredly John D.'s luck. The Oil King today often quotes maxims of his late wife such as: "To be a good wife and mother is the highest and hardest privilege of woman." There is every evidence that Rockefeller adored his wife. One may say without disrespect that they were perfectly mated, though gold and the power of gold never meant to her what it meant to him.

Laura Rockefeller died March 12, 1915, a few months after her golden wedding anniversary. One of her husband's favorite poems, "The Christian's Good Night" by Sarah Dondeny, was recited at her bier. The poem will also be read when John D. is gathered to his fathers:

"Sleep on, beloved, and take thy rest,
"Lay down thy head upon thy Saviour's breast,
"We loved thee well, but Jesus loves thee best!
"Good night! Good night!"

In 1865, Rockefeller determined to go into oil refining exclusively. In three years, Clark and Rockefeller and the former's brothers, James and Richard, had invested some $100,000 in the refinery and had taken out almost as much in net profits. The refinery was no longer a side line. Rockefeller's passion for profits was aroused. In oil he sensed fortune. With unerring instinct—the gist of his genius always has lain in picking men for his purpose—he saw that Clark was no longer essential to him but that Andrews was.

He needed Andrews' technical skill. So he went to him and suggested an alliance. Andrews agreed. Then he approached Clark and proposed that the refinery and good will be sold to him. Clark demurred. He, also, was keenly alive to the money-making possibilities of oil. Finally it was agreed that the plant be put up at auction. The Clarks were represented by an attorney who acted as auctioneer. Rockefeller was his own counsel. He had calculated that the plant, minus cash assets and debts, was worth about $40,000.

Starting at $500, the price quickly ran up to $50,000, then by slow stages to $60,000. Both sides were loath to let go of a good thing. Sixty-five, seventy thousand dollars was

reached. Perspiration trickled from the foreheads and into the eyes of the contestants, greedy with cupidity and gleaming with battle light. At last the Clarks bid $72,000. Rockefeller snapped: "Seventy-two thousand five hundred." "All right, John, it's yours," panted Maurice Clark. "That's beyond my limit."

At twenty-six, John D. became a full-fledged oil operator. Just ten years before he had earned $15 a month as an office boy. Now he was able to produce $72,500 in cash. Verily, the righteous were prospering.

Clark took over the commission business and Rockefeller formed the firm of Rockefeller and Andrews. At last, he felt, he was where fortunes grew. From the very first, Rockefeller and Andrews prospered. Andrews handled the manufacturing, with sure touch. He got a larger proportion of refined from his crude than any one else. The frugal Rockefeller made the bargains and pushed the sales. The combination was irresistible. Soon a second refinery was opened. It was called William Rockefeller and Company.

All the time Rockefeller was borrowing to the very limit of his credit, and then some. In borrowing, as in bargaining, he had extraordinary ability to bend men to his wishes.

One day a nervous bank president met him on the street and informed him that the bank's board of directors were showing signs of timidity and wanted to meet the young man who was so money-thirsty and discuss loans and collateral. For a full minute Rockefeller bored the banker with eyes that were like cold steel. Finally, he said icily: "I shall be very glad to demonstrate the strength of my credit at any time. Next week I shall need more money. I would like to give my business to your bank. Soon"—he added slowly and significently—"I shall have a great deal of money to invest."

The directors did not hale John D. before them and the latter secured further extensions of credit.

Credit requirements at this period brought Rockefeller into contact with a man destined to become his most valuable viceroy. This was Henry Morrison Flagler. Flagler was an extraordinary business genius. His mind was penetrant with no detours. Upon his brain large pictures planted themselves, automatically. He did not possess Rockefeller's money touch, quite. No man since Midas has. But he was fully as capable an organizer and in

many respects his vision reached out beyond Rockefeller's.

To Flagler, more than to any other individual, does John D. credit the almost unbelievably rapid erection of the great commercial monopoly that is the wonder of statists and the marvel of economists the world over. For years Flagler and Rockefeller worked at adjoining desks and lived in adjoining houses. Three times a day, morning, noon and evening, they walked to and from business, ironing out problems and discussing matters too delicate for four walls.

Flagler was as bold as a lion in business but sensitive and silent in personal relationships. He was a born leader and the type that Rockefeller liked best—pious, secretive, a good listener. Only John D. himself exceeded Flagler in the subtle ability to draw out men and pump them dry.

Once Flagler remarked to Rockefeller: "John, a friendship founded on business is a whole lot better than a business founded on friendship, isn't it?"

The name of Flagler is never brought up today, that John D. does not recall the quotation. Flagler's great railroad and hotel proj-

ects in Florida always enlisted Rockefeller's warm admiration, if not his cash.

Unlike Rockefeller, Flagler had known the grinding pinch of poverty. Born in 1830, in the small town of Hammondsport, N. Y., Flagler had trekked over the middle west with his father, a pioneer missionary. His education was caught on the wing. At fourteen he decided to shift for himself. He made his way to a hamlet called Republic, in Seneca County, Ohio, and got a job at $5 a month clerking in a crossroads grocery store.

The boy Flagler slept under the counter, rolling himself in crackling wrapping paper for warmth. When the circus came to town or upon some other unexpected holiday, he was too beaten by fatigue to enter into the festivities. He'd crawl into the woods and sleep the day away on the pine needles.

Business then was a matter of barter. Salt was the medium of exchange. Flagler became interested in its manufacture and went to Michigan. He lost his small savings. Undiscouraged, he returned to Ohio and tried his luck in various enterprises. Eventually, he became a grain dealer and supplied a whiskey distillery in Monroeville, Ohio. Here his path first crossed Rockefeller's. Clark and Rocke-

feller were the distillery's agents in Cleveland. Despite moral scruples, John D. had no hesitancy in accepting commissions that blossomed from the manufacture of good corn liquor.

Varying fortune attended Flagler. He married a niece of Stephen V. Harkness, who owned the distillery. The Flaglers moved to Cleveland, where Henry tinkered with a patented machine for making horseshoes. It failed. Clark and Rockefeller gave him desk room.

Meanwhile, Stephen Harkness had floated into Cleveland on the crest of a fortune and was popularly known as the richest man in the city. The Harkness fortune is said to have been founded upon a tip from John Sherman, then in Congress. Sherman informed Harkness that the government intended levying a special war tax of two dollars a gallon upon all high wines manufactured after a certain date. Harkness bought up thousands upon thousands of barrels of whiskey, rum and brandy and stored the liquor in warehouses all over Ohio. He cleaned up hugely when public announcement was made of the tax.

In his insatiable quest for credit, Rockefeller turned to Flagler. He asked Flagler to interest Harkness in the expanding Rockefeller

and Andrews business. By now, scarcely a year after he had embarked exclusively in the oil business, John D. had built up his refinery to a point where it exceeded in profit and capacity any other plant in Cleveland, with the exception of the Clark, Payne Co. This was composed of James H. Clark, brother of Maurice, and Colonel O. H. Payne, afterward prominently identified with the Standard Oil Company. James Clark and Oliver Payne, incidentally, owned everything in common, even their homes, with never a scratch of the pen to bind them. Theirs was the only competition that John D. feared.

Flagler went to Harkness on behalf of Rockefeller and Andrews. Harkness told his nephew-in-law to have his friend drop around. The retired distiller and John D. talked for hours. At the conclusion of the conference Harkness said: "Young man, you can have all the money you want. You are on the right track and I am with you."

Rockefeller drew heavily upon Harkness, so heavily that both men finally felt that Harkness should enjoy active interest in the partnership of Rockefeller and Andrews. "I'll make Henry my watchdog," laughed Harkness. And,

in 1867, Rockefeller and Andrews became Rockefeller, Andrews and Flagler.

Flagler soon made himself an enormously effective force in the business. Rockefeller was first to acknowledge this. One morning, as they were walking to work, Flagler remarked: "John, there are too many refineries here. Wonder if we couldn't combine some of these local interests to advantage?"

Rockefeller cuddled the idea for a spell.

"Yes, Henry," he offered at last, "I'd like to combine some of these refineries with ours. The business would be much more simple. But how are you going to determine the unit of valuation? How are you going to find a yardstick to measure their value?"

They walked a few rods further.

"John," said Flagler quietly, "I'll find a yardstick."

That afternoon Flagler visited a little refinery on the lake and talked with the owner about selling out to Rockefeller, Andrews and Flagler.

"Give me what I have put in and I'll sell," said the small refiner.

Flagler strolled about, with darting eyes. "All right," he offered after a few minutes,

"we'll pay you $4700 for your plant as it stands."

The struggling refiner gasped. "Wa'll, you've hit it pretty near right," he ejaculated. "I put in $2,000 cash and borrowed $2,500 to build this here plant. It's yours for $4700. Oil ain't my game."

Thus was launched an idea, the direct realization of which was the formation of the Standard Oil Company.

IV

A REFINER MARCHES TOWARD MONOPOLY

OIL had become big business by the time those avaricious and ambitious young Aladdins, Rockefeller and Flagler, really began to rub their kerosene lamps and evoke the spirit of combination.

Stability had slowly been established in the Oil Regions. Necessary man power was released by the final bugle of the Civil War. A deodorant had been found for evil-smelling crude petroleum. Pipe lines had proved practical and had pushed their way to the mouths of the wells, eliminating the teamsters and the flat boats.

Three powerful railroad systems—Pennsylvania, New York Central and Erie—had penetrated the heart of Petrolia and were in vicious competition for the rich oil-carrying trade. Col. Thomas A. Scott, popularly designated "the man who owns Pennsylvania," was czar of the "Pennsy" system. Those fascinating pirates, Gould and Fisk, were flicking about

with the Erie as does a girl with her latest favorite. Iron-textured Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt, his pleasant son, William H. Vanderbilt, and the latter's son-in-law, Horace F. Clark, were the Central's hetmen.

There were five chief refining centres (running a neck and neck race): the Oil Regions, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York and Cleveland. The Pennsylvania Railroad and its ally, the Empire Pipe Line, naturally favored the sections that lay within their domain, the Oil Regions, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia.

Gould and Fisk were allied with the Pennsylvania Transportation Company, the Empire's only rival pipe line system of importance. The notorious Erie manipulators were also erecting a refinery near Jersey City. Thus they were doubly eager to divert oil to New York.

The New York Central and its subsidiary, the Lake Shore Railroad, served both Cleveland and New York.

With the exuberance of pioneers, the oil producers, in the Regions, boasted that they would control not only the production but the refining of the new and fugitive fuel. "The world is weeping for oil," was their attitude. "Let it come to us."

This was the situation in 1868, when General

J. H. Devereaux succeeded Amasa Stone, John Hay's father-in-law, as vice president of the Lake Shore Railroad. "Cleveland," Gen. Devereaux swore twelve years later, "was to be wiped out as a refining centre as with a sponge. This was publicly proclaimed in the press of Oil City, Titusville, and other places."

Cleveland refiners, Gen. Devereaux said, came to him in panic, fearful they would be compelled either to quit business or move to the Oil Regions. There was but one exception. The firm of Rockefeller, Andrews and Flagler seemed replete with courage. This firm had no fear of its future.

But it did desire to form an alliance with the railroad, for mutual advantage. Henry Flagler dropped in upon Gen. Devereaux and proposed, with perfect coolness, that the Lake Shore reduce its rate, for Rockefeller, Andrews and Flagler's oil shipments from the Oil Regions to Cleveland, thence to New York, from $2.40 to $1.75 per barrel.

"We shall assume all risks from fire and other accidents," offered Flagler. "Also, we will assure you sixty carloads of refined oil a day from Cleveland to New York. You can reduce your running time and route these cars

in solid oil trains. Your road will make more money than at present."

Gen. Devereaux accepted the proposition and swore that Flagler's predictions proved "preeminently" correct.

Thus began a system of secret rebates which Rockefeller and his partners later brought to perfect flowering.

This arrangement, simple as it sounds, made Rockefeller, Andrews and Flagler the largest firm in what soon became the largest refining centre in the country. Of course, the moral aspects of the stealthy understanding are open to debate.

"We gave the railroads more than we got," insists John D., relating toothsomely the tale of the canny Scotch merchant who, when asked what he thought of special privileges and rebates, replied:

"Laddie, I'm against 'em—onless I'm in 'em."

Working constantly in both Rockefeller and Flagler, at this time, was an idea of fusion and merger. These perfectly mated partners were microscopically examining the methods by which the Western Union Telegraph Company was organizing and by which Commo-

dore Vanderbilt was cementing tiny railroads into an imposing system. John D. holds that the first real trusts were the Western Union and the New York Central.

Nevertheless, he and Flagler were surely not far behind. By the close of 1869, Rockefeller, Andrews and Flagler had outstripped all competition in Cleveland. Other refiners in the Ohio city had recovered from their fright at the menaces from the Oil Regions and were standing with R., A. & F. It was a wise choice. Cleveland had a refining capacity of about 11,000 barrels a day. Rockefeller and his partners controlled 1,500 barrels. They had bought several rival plants, scrapped one or two, continued others.

In all these purchases, Flagler was the "yardstick" man. Rockefeller handled the books and darted in and out about the plants. He and a favored foreman, Ambrose McGregor, used to barge, noon days, into the boarding house of one Mrs. Jones, down near the water front, for a quick snack of food. Their boots, ofttimes, were pungent with oil. Other diners complained and asked that the oil men be seated at the second table. In those days the second table got cold "leavings."

"Rocky" and "Mac" accepted the situation

good-naturedly. McGregor later became a multi-millionaire.

As Rockefeller, Andrews and Flagler grew lusty, Flagler became its "attorney." Flagler knew naught of Blackstone but he was adept as any expert at drawing contracts. He and the pious Rockefeller decided to buy the land upon which stood their principal refinery. One John Irwin owned the property. A price was set and Irwin appeared to ratify the agreement. In the Flagler-framed contract, the line ran "south to the mullen stalk." John D. was horrified at Flagler's unbusinesslike phrasing but Flagler explained: "You remember that mullen stalk, John. Well, when the surveyors come out tomorrow, just point the stalk out to them and they'll put down the proper stakes."

"Lawyers could have learned much from my old partner, Henry Flagler," says John D. "He just used common sense and he had a great deal of it."

Another small plant absorbed in these developing days was conducted by a German baker to whom Flagler had once sold grain. The baker, a fat, nervous little man, was no more qualified to refine oil than Jack Dempsey to discuss relativity with Einstein. He was

losing money and appealed to Flagler. The latter approached Rockefeller.

"John," said Flagler, "I have this little fellow on my conscience. Let's buy his plant and advise him to go back to baking."

Rockefeller demurred. Flagler insisted. The plant was purchased. The German came to Flagler for advice. "Wait a bit, Johann," said Flagler. "Mr. Rockefeller and I are going to form a stock corporation. If you think we are trustworthy, we'll give you half the amount in cash; the rest you can take in our stock."

Meanwhile, the rotund little baker, later to become wealthy from this investment, was put to work as "superintendent of barrels." It was his duty to see that timber shipped to Rockefeller, Andrews and Flagler had already been "dried out" in the woods so that the sap wouldn't show on the freight bills. A saving of one-third in weight of the wood that went into R., A. & F.'s barrels. John D. economy!

The stock corporation Flagler had in mind was the Standard Oil Company. The name sprang from a desire to manufacture a "standard" grade of oil.

The company came into being January 10, 1870. Flagler drew up the papers. The incorporators were: John D. Rockefeller, Samuel

Andrews, Henry M. Flagler, Stephen V. Harkness and William Rockefeller. The capital stock was $1,000,000, partitioned into shares of $100 each. The purpose of the "body corporate" was the "manufacture of petroleum" and "to deal in petroleum and its products."

The residences of all the partners, save William Rockefeller, were given as Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. William Rockefeller was recorded as residing in the "city, county and state of New York."

Stout, jolly William had been sent to New York by brother John as export and commission agent of Rockefeller, Andrews and Flagler. He had established offices at 140 Pearl Street. William was handling those sixty car load lots a day that were pouring in over the Central system, and arranging for their diffusion over the east and in Europe. His presence in New York marked a further step in one of John D.'s most pregnant business principles: abolish middle men. "Pay a profit to nobody." If John D. had to shell out commissions, he'd keep them in the family!

This, then, was the situation in 1870: the Standard Oil Company of Cleveland was the largest individual refiner in the country. The Oil Regions were boastfully determined to

control the product of their wells. Three trunk line railways, with powerful pipe line allies, were competing for the oil traffic. The earth was oil conscious. But refining capacity was running far ahead of market demand.

As though to atone for ancient niggardliness, Nature was pouring out a huge stream of oil. Prices of refined were falling. Plants had multiplied. Profits were slipping away. The oil industry was a madhouse. John D. and his associates were puzzled. Some sort of control, of stabilization, was necessary? What to do?

As though in answer to prayer came what seemed a solution!

It was a scheme that has been known to veteran oil men for fifty-eight years as the South (or Southern) Improvement Company. John D. was in this scheme to the full, profited by it enormously, but never discusses it.

The plan originated with certain refiners in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. These men purchased a charter of the sort granted ad lib in the days of loose legislation and organized the South Improvement Company. The charter permitted its holders to engage in practically every sort of business.

The organizers met secretly in Philadelphia

during the late fall of 1871, and invited Rockefeller and Flagler to join in a discussion of plans for "stabilizing" oil. It was proposed and agreed that the refining interests represented force the railroads to negotiate exclusive contracts, providing special privileges for transportation: rebates running to fifty per cent, daily examination of railroad shipments. Also—and this is the remarkable part—what excess other oil men paid, over and above the rate allowed the South Improvement schemers, was to be paid by the railroads themselves into the eager pockets of the combination. This was the so-called "drawback."

Why such hard headed men as W. H. Vanderbilt, Jay Gould and Tom Scott went into the arrangement is a mystery. But they did. There must have been a deal of persuasive power in Rockefeller and his associates.

"I told Billy not to have anything to do with that scheme," said old Commodore Vanderbilt, wagging his head sadly.

"They were smart men, smarter than I," admitted son Billy, wryly.

On the face of it, the South Improvement men won what would have proved priceless concessions by pure bluff and nerve. Controlling less than ten per cent of the country's

refining capacity, they assured the railroad officials that they intended to "take everybody in—producers as well as refiners."

"Sign these contracts and your freight problems will be solved," pressed the rapacious raiders.

However, the oil-hauling railway gentlemen—Messrs. Vanderbilt, Gould, Scott and the others—were every one of them capable of swallowing and digesting a million or two of dollars without the least stomachic inconvenience. No one knows the complete understanding arrived at between them and Rockefeller as to their share of the rebate-drawback swag.

What division occurred later, and how much went to Messrs. Vanderbilt, Gould, Scott, et cet., individually and personally, there is no means of ascertaining. One may be sure, however, that they had in no wise overlooked themselves, nor failed to lick their fingers, as good cooks should.

Of 2,000 shares of South Improvement stock, Rockefeller and the Standard Oil group secured nine hundred. W. G. Warden, of Philadelphia, received 475 shares; O. F. Waring, of Pittsburgh, a like amount; Peter H. Watson, of Ashtabula, Ohio, one hundred shares. Watson

was elected president, Warden secretary. Watson had been assistant secretary of war under the dynamic Stanton and was now general freight agent of the Lake Shore, as well as an extensive oil operator.

The contracts with the railroads were signed, amid great secrecy, in January, 1872. On New Year's Day, the Standard Oil Company increased its capitalization from $1,000,000 to $2,500,000. Five additional Cleveland capitalists had been added to the list of stockholders: Truman P. Handy, Stillman Witt, Amasa Stone, Benjamin Brewster and O. B. Jennings.

Under the South Improvement contracts the rate on crude from the Oil Regions to New York was set at $2.56 per barrel. Rockefeller and his associates were to be blessed with a rebate of $1.06 on this amount and also were to be paid an additional $1.06—the seductive "drawback"—on each barrel of crude shipped by independents. Similarly Standard was to pay forty cents—exactly half the charge to men outside the South Improvement combination—to get a barrel of crude from Oil Creek to Cleveland. A pleasing prospect to frugal men such as John Rockefeller and Henry Flagler.

A moment's consideration will show that this secret arrangement made competition not only difficult but impossible. The harder a competitor worked and the more oil he shipped, the greater the receipts of John D. and the better able was the latter to undersell his rival. John D. was in the enviable position of the man who makes money not only from his own efforts but from those of his competitors.

In addition to these enormous advantages, the combination was to receive daily way bills showing exactly what business rivals were doing. This idea represented the beginnings of what in later years blossomed into a world-wide Standard spy system.

Men so astute as Rockefeller and Flagler must have had some doubts whether so bold a piece of piracy could be brought to fruition. But they had thought out a plan whereby they, at least, would profit—no matter what the ultimate fate of the South Improvement Company.

A full month before the Oil Regions learned of the secret contracts, John D. began making personal calls—just little neighborly visits—upon other Cleveland refiners. They numbered twenty-six then.

Within four weeks, twenty-one of the twenty-six had sold out to the Standard!

Pledging his rivals to strict secrecy, the shrewd chieftain of the Standard displayed the South Improvement contracts and demonstrated that soon his freight rates would be fully one hundred per cent below theirs.

"Now," he proffered softly, "come in with us. Don't go into a hopeless fight. Let us save your business. Take either cash or stock in the Standard. It will be for your good to take stock. This business is going to be stabilized and, if you come with us, your families will bless you in the future."

In the ears of timid, frightened men, the argument fell persuasively. Day after day, John D. came bounding into the Standard office, danced a jig, seized Samuel Andrews by the shoulders and exclaimed: "One more in the fold, Sam! One more in the fold!"

Such unbendings were rare, for Rockefeller realized to the full the value of an austere exterior. By now his habitual gravity of mien was emphasized by a full curtain of light brown beard, extending from ear to ear. He thus impressed observers, the quotation is from a business biography of the period: "Mr. Rockefeller occupies a position in our business

circles second to but few. Close application to one kind of business, an avoidance of all positions of an honorary character that cost time, keeping everything pertaining to his business in so methodical a manner that he knows every night how he stands with the world."

Rockefeller was more than methodical. Behind a screen of low voice and deferential manner was a spirit bold and daring. He was like a red head duck swooping down upon a slow-thinking canvasback and snatching hard-won celery from the latter's bill.

Further, he recognized to the full that there is such a factor as the ripeness of time. If Columbus had not discovered America when he did, some other mariner would, for the time was ripe. If Rockefeller hadn't devised the trust idea when he did, some other man would have devised it, for the trust time was ripe.

Beyond all doubt, it was this astonishing sense of opportunism that made him master of the Cleveland oil industry in a month.

John D. holds that, in 1872, it was economically essential for Standard Oil to absorb its rivals.

"We always gave them choice of stock or cash," he insists, "and we much preferred that they accept stock. We were always hard

pressed for money. Our capital requirements always outran our ability to borrow."

Chuckling, he adds:

"We had to do a lot of bluffing with our check book in those days. When our appraisers had set a value upon a property and the time had come to pass title, I would whip out our large check book and remark in an off hand way: 'Will you have cash or stock? You may have cash if you wish but, mark my words, certificates will prove more valuable.' The majority took stock, and we were very much relieved."

Often as possible, Rockefeller paid current bills in stock. Great fortunes grew out of some of these payments. And there were amusing incidents connected with them. Two brothers, John and Hugh Huntington, disputed bitterly over the question of taking part stock, part cash payments for fireproof gravel roofs they had put on some of Rockefeller's oil tanks. Both wanted cash. Hugh finally got his share in cash. John Huntington reluctantly kept the stock Rockefeller forced upon him. John died a multi-millionaire, Hugh in moderate circumstances.

Despite ceaseless activity, John D. found time for church and Sunday school and for

nursery play with his three lusty infant daughters. He accepted fatherhood, as he accepted rebate-nourished wealth, as direct gifts from heaven.

Of course, there were some refiners in Cleveland who did not wish to be merged into Standard Oil. Rockefeller, Flagler and their associates felt regretfully impelled to lead them to the light. The few whose first vision was dim were later forced to accept smaller sums for their properties.

When the bright beams of spring glinted Lake Erie, John D. took stock. Standard Oil had leaped from a daily refining capacity of 1,500 barrels to one of 10,000 barrels. This was one-fifth of the entire refining capacity of the United States—greater than all the New York refineries, greater than the Oil Regions. Truly, the boy of Ledger A had gone far.

Meanwhile, what of those stealthy South Improvement Company contracts with Messrs. Gould, Scott and Vanderbilt? They could not, of course, be concealed long. On the morning of February 26, 1872, the men of the Oil Regions and independent refiners in the large centres learned, with amazement, of the new differential scale of freight rates.

The stunning revelation launched what the press of the period christened "The Oil War of 1872." The engagement was short, snappy and, for the moment, decisive. There were mass meetings, parades, boycotts. The Creek men organized a Petroleum Producers' Union and pledged that they would not sell one drop of oil to any man or firm affiliated with the South Improvement Company. The newspapers lashed the scheme. The state legislatures of Ohio and Pennsylvania introduced anti-rebate clauses into their constitutions.

Up and down the Creek floated banners: "Down With the Conspirators!" "No Compromise!" "Don't Give Up the Ship!" Mobs of infuriated oil men paraded the streets of their rude towns denouncing the "Forty Thieves," the "Monster," the "Great Anaconda."

A congressional committee took a hand, summoned Watson and Warden, and denounced the South Improvement scheme as a steal and a conspiracy.

A black list was spread broadcast giving the following refiners as directors of the South Improvement. It was Rockefeller's first bath in antagonistic ink:

P. H. Watson, President S. I. Co.

Charles Lockhart,
W. P. Logan,
O. F. Waring,
J. A. Bostwick,
W. G. Warden,
John Rockefeller,
Amasa Stone.

The railroads took panic over the public outcry and on March 25, 1872, signed an agreement with the oil producers forever abolishing the discriminatory rebate. The March 25 meeting was held in the office of the Erie Railroad in New York. For the first time Rockefeller appeared in public as an active member of the South Improvement Company. He and Peter Watson (the latter had borne the brunt of the unpalatable criticism) knocked at the door of the conference chamber. They were refused admittance. The *New York Times* representative wrote that Rockefeller looked "pretty blue" when he went away.

The new contract of March 25 pledged the three oil-carrying railway systems to handle the transportation of oil "on a basis of perfect equality to all shippers, producers and refiners, and that no rebates, drawbacks, or other arrangements of any character shall be made or

allowed that will give any party the slightest difference in rates or discriminations of any character whatever."

The Petroleum Producers' Union brought the railroads to quick surrender, principally because of vitriolic support from refiners in New York and the Oil Regions. The metropolitan refiners were led by H. H. Rogers, of Charles Pratt and Company. The South Improvement cabalists had left New York out in the cold. Rogers was properly indignant. He and Rockefeller met first during this "Oil War of 1872."

It is difficult to believe that there was any particular warmth of personality contact between the two, but each recognized in the other a strong man. Soon, very soon, they were to join in a business alliance that was to last during the remainder of Rogers' life.

Another who fought South Improvement bitterly and capably was John D. Archbold. He was an independent Creek refiner, an active, efficient, swaggering young man. A couple of years before, on one of his numerous gumshoe trips through the Oil Regions, John Rockefeller found himself at night in a rude hotel. It may have been the old Moran House

in Oil City or the American Hotel in Petroleum Centre.

As he stepped up to register, Rockefeller noted a name written in bold, flowing capitals:

JOHN D. ARCHBOLD, $4.00 a BBL.

Rockefeller sought out Archbold and they had a friendly chat, the former seeking to convince the latter that crude oil wasn't worth $4.00 a barrel. Rockefeller that evening marked Archbold as a man of whom to take note. Later, Archbold became one of Rockefeller's right bowers in Standard Oil.

John D. has a pet story concerning Archbold's appearance once on the witness stand. A hectoring lawyer asked his connection with the particular company under examination. Archbold replied that he was a director.

"Ah," exclaimed the attorney, "and what, may I ask, is your chief responsibility as a director?"

"To clamor for dividends," responded Archbold promptly.

Rockefeller and the Standard Oil Company of Cleveland emerged from the fallen frame of the South Improvement scheme the only material winners. John D. and those who had linked their destinies with his were not merely

rich. They were well on the way to becoming wealthy in a sense of which America in the seventies could scarcely conceive.

However, there was one obstacle. Throughout the entire Oil Regions, Rockefeller and his mates were now set down as sharpers. Thenceforth Standard Oil and suspicion were synonymous terms. Mutual distrust was to grow and widen.

But the young man of Cleveland was a business genius, quite determined upon conquering the world and elevating himself to a position of dazzling eminence. His gold-hunger had grown with the gold it fed on. To feed it further he was perfectly willing to go again to the commercially left oblique. The formalism of his religious faith raised no ethical barrier.

He was very well satisfied with progress. His dreams and schemes now went far. He would seek world dominion in his chosen field. He sensed opportunity for enormous wealth.

And there was no limit, apparently, to the lust for money of this thirty-three-year-old genius of oil.

V

A BUSINESS GENIUS MAKES THE WORLD PAY TRIBUTE

IN 1882, John Rockefeller sat modestly in a modest office at 44 Broadway, New York, with the world in his lap. This was three years before the great Standard Oil enterprises moved a few doors down the street and 26 Broadway became the best known business address on earth.

Now, after ten crowded years of intrigue, our modern Machiavelli was undisputed Lord of Oil. Rockefeller and those he had selected to serve his all-embracing ambition controlled, almost exclusively, the manufacture, transportation and sale of the fluid men required to light their homes and lubricate their machinery.

By a series of manoeuvres, feline in their ferocity, Rockefeller had concentrated into his own hands an Emperor's power over an industry. He had coerced and whipped the great oil-carrying railroads and allied himself with them, on his own terms. He had snuffed out

or absorbed most of the independent refineries of the country. He was in the dictator's seat and setting the price foreign countries were required to pay for oil. Above all, he had scattered and routed the producers.

These pioneers—the men who took the most risk and drew crude petroleum from the earth—were now prostrate, forced to accept whatever price the Octopus placed upon their product. The men of the Oil Regions had not yielded without a bitter and savage struggle. Nothing exceeded this struggle in duration but the Thirty Years War. And its cruelties equalled Pizzaro's. An ironic student of the times compared the contest to the barbarous hostilities between the Guelfs and the Ghibellines.

"John Rockefeller led the Ghibellines," commented this observer, "Attila the Guelfs. Or someone else equally ruthless and cruel. And, oh! the horrid things they said and the wicked things they did! Not even the Borgia boys and the de Medici girls excelled these leaders in cunning. If the Guelfs shot a dog, John bumped off two cats. If they burned a church, John poisoned a well. If they wrecked a refinery, John tore up a railroad or fired an orphans' home."

It was during this bitter but brilliant strife that Rockefeller's genius reached its zenith. But, in the fires of that consuming struggle, were laid the foundations for digestive and nervous maladies that later almost cost Rockefeller his life and did, temporarily, cost him his stomach, reducing his diet to that of the pauper.

The Rockefeller of 1882 was a very different man from the vigorous, vital Rockefeller of ten years before. A wisp of frost showed in this later Rockefeller's hair and in the mop of moustache that completely covered his thin lips. There was a noticeable stoop in the shoulders. Vertical furrows were beginning to plough the cheeks. A slight film clouded the cold blue eyes that seemed to look through rather than at one.

John D. had gone through more than a life time in these ten years. Often his mail had been heavy with death threats. The "Holy Blue" Standard barrels had often been scrawled with cross-and-skulls. Rioting men had cursed his name. He had been indicted by a grand jury as a business fraud, cheat and conspirator against his fellow man. The price of ambition was stiff. But he was willing to pay it. For there still worked fiercely in him

the ambition to become the richest man in the world.

Across the street from him in Cleveland lived a man whom he had known for years. At intervals Rockefeller would run over for an evening's chat—he himself couldn't tell you why. The man visited was a bookworm and cared as little for money as Rockefeller cared for anything else. The visiting Mr. Rockefeller invariably came upon his neighbor surrounded by shelves of books.

Only once did Rockefeller so much as notice the books; they no more attracted his eye than would a dead wall. Upon arrival, Rockefeller's first move was to ask permission to turn down the gas, for he liked to sit in a self-constructed twilight and found a flood of radiance disquieting. Then in the half-darkness he would talk—talk of money, always of money. The single time he referred to the books was characteristic. The visited bookworm sat with his finger keeping the place in a volume of Moore's "Life of Byron." Rockefeller noticed it.

"You get pleasure out of your books, Judge?" he said musingly.

"Yes," responded the bookworm.

"Do you know the only thing that gives me pleasure?" asked Rockefeller, looking up with

a fashion of guilelessness, at once sly and bland. "It's to see my dividends coming in," he whispered; "just to see my dividends coming in!" And as he said it he made a drawing, scraping motion across the table with his scooped hand, as though raking in imaginary riches.

"And yet," observed the bookish man who told the anecdote, "Mr. Rockefeller is haunted with a desire to be popular. Strange as it may sound, he'd give anything if everybody on earth would only love him. But he hasn't the least conception of how to set about gaining that love. He's like the cow in the fable that was crazy to be a pet and, envying the dog the caresses its master lavished upon it, threw herself into the man's lap as he sat asleep in an orchard."

Desire to win the love of man never showed in his business relations.

Public outcry had killed the notorious South Improvement Company. But certain features of the scheme appealed mightily to Rockefeller, Flagler and their associates in the powerful Standard Oil Company of Cleveland. The rebate and the drawback allured them. They were firmly committed to the principle

that to the mighty belong the spoils. And were they not the mightiest refiners in the country?

So, quietly, they negotiated another rebate with the New York Central system. They dickered with William H. Vanderbilt—Son Billy—who'd said: "These men are smarter than I." Vanderbilt, of course, was under solemn pledge, by the agreement of March 25, 1872, to grant no exclusive favor to any shipper. But railroad morality walked upon banana peels when profits were concerned. Son Billy realized the damage to the Central if the Standard trade went the lake-and-canal route in warm weather and perhaps to other carriers in winter; and so a stealthy rebate was granted the Rockefeller company. This rebate did not become publicly known until blurted out years later in one of the numerous anti-trust investigations of the 80's. Possibly as a bit of salve to the Vanderbilt conscience, Son Billy was sold (or given) stock in the Standard Oil Company.

About the same period, 1874, Jay Gould's Erie Railroad saw the advantage of an alliance with Rockefeller and Flagler. By now, the Standard had established a great oil depot at Hunter's Point, in New York harbor. This

plant was fully equipped for receiving, treating, barreling and shipping oil, both for the export and domestic trade. It had its own cooperage, made its own acids, glue, etc. It operated under the direction of William Rockefeller. In view of the unusual facilities of this plant, the New York Central had agreed to bear the expense of delivering crude oil in lighters to Hunter's Point.

The Erie, eager to build up its oil traffic, asked Rockefeller to ship some of his petroleum through the Erie depot at Weehawken. John D. agreed, providing he could secure as juicy a concession from the Erie as he already enjoyed from the Central. In fact, he went further: he offered to take over the Erie depot, guaranteeing equal accommodations to all Erie shippers. A contract was signed, under date of April 17, 1874, by which the Weehawken yards passed into the control of the Standard in return for the latter's pledge to ship fifty per cent of the products of its western refineries over the Erie. The agreement gave Rockefeller wonderful advantages. He now had two trunk lines in his pocket—Central and Erie. He could play one against the other. He was in a position to spy out the activities of other oil shippers. In those days half the battle

lay in knowing what the other fellow was doing and with whom he was allied.

Rockefeller rubbed his hands with glee and passed on to a bigger project that was in his mind. This was no less than an enlargement of the piratical South Improvement Company scheme. He planned an organization of the strongest refineries of the country, under his control—an organization so powerful that it could dictate prices to producers, transporters and consumers. This was the crux of his dream and the entering wedge by which he was eventually to monopolize no less than eighty-five per cent of the oil industry.

Of course, the predatory plan was based upon railroad discrimination, and of course, it ignored the producer. In John D.'s eyes, the well owner was a gambler, always up in the sky, risking his darn fool financial neck in hopes of bringing in a gusher. Let this roystering fellow look after himself. Business was a cold-blooded proposition and only cold-blooded men could carry it on successfully.

So, argued Rockefeller and his elbow-coadjutor, Flagler, let's revive the South Improvement idea, taking in the men we can use, eliminating the rest. The railroads are venal. We can control them. Give them enough traffic

and they'd trample their grandmothers' graves. The men we want with us are those who control the finished product, fellows who will stand pat no matter how the wind blows.

Accordingly, in the summer of 1874, Rockefeller wrote to William G. Warden, of Philadelphia, a colleague of two years before in the South Improvement Company. The letter read something like this:

W. G. Warden, Atlantic Refining Company,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
My Dear Mr. Warden:

My associate, Mr. H. M. Flagler, and I would like to talk over the condition of the oil business with you. Will you communicate with Mr. Charles Lockhart, of Pittsburgh, and meet us at a time convenient to yourselves in Saratoga Springs, N. Y.?

We trust to your discretion to keep the matter strictly confidential.

Very truly,
John D. Rockefeller,
President, Standard Oil Company of Cleveland.

Warden was hesitant. He was a family man and had been keenly hurt by attacks upon the

South Improvement Company of which he had reluctantly accepted the secretaryship. His refinery was making money. But he had met Rockefeller often enough to realize that this striding young Goliath was no man to ignore. So he approached Lockhart, strongest of the Pittsburgh refiners, and together they entrained for Saratoga.

Flagler and Rockefeller had been at the Spa for a week enjoying the waters and the races. John D. has always loved horses though, as a godly man strictly opposed to gambling in any form, he has never bet on the races. Horses respond to him and whinny when he is about. He has owned some fine pacers and trotters. Even in this horseless age, his stables at Pocantico house forty mounts. The blood of his father must call through him to the equine. Old Bill Rockefeller, as we have seen, loved horses even more than he loved his rod, his gun—or that marvelous cancer cure!

So the four oil men—Rockefeller, Flagler, Warden and Lockhart—came together at breakfast in Saratoga.

In the clear, azure sunshine of August, they strolled out to a pavilion. Six hours passed. A pregnant period! The Standard Oil men confided to their guests that their profits for

the preceding year had been more than $1,000,000 on a capitalization of $2,500,000. The very satisfactory profit, they explained, was the sole result of combination in one refining centre. They proposed that Warden and Lockhart attempt in Philadelphia and in Pittsburgh what they themselves had accomplished in Cleveland, i. e., absorb or buy out rival refineries.

They proposed the formation of a secret alliance to be called the Central Association. This Association would take over their plants and others and operate jointly. So far as the public or the oil trade was to know, for the time being, all the members of the new alliance were still active competitors. Needless to say, the Central Association was, in reality, the Standard Oil Company.

At the end of the fateful conference, Warden and Lockhart agreed not only to join the new Association but actually (and secretly) to sell their plants to the Standard Oil Company, taking stock in exchange. Also they agreed to gobble up rival refineries in their districts as rapidly as possible. And they pledged their honor as gentlemen to keep all transactions absolutely confidential.

Now John D. was launched upon the great-

est adventure of his life! A monopoly! A dream of years coming true. . . .

It would be interesting to be able to record the conversation that occurred between Rockefeller and Flagler when they returned to their rooms in the United States Hotel. Perhaps Flagler merely remarked: "John, shall we have escalloped oysters for supper?" Or that Rockefeller danced his little jig and exclaimed: "Henry, this is a great day! I am going to order a small magnum of champagne for you, but for myself, just a grilled squab. And the check is on me."

No one will ever know.

But these two canny, pious, money-lustful men were on their way toward control of a vast industry and enormous wealth. They went to New York and in October of that momentous 1874 persuaded Charles Pratt and H. H. Rogers, of Charles Pratt and Company, to sell out to them. Pratt and Company was a solidly established firm. Pratt and Rogers received stock in the Standard. This purchase, of course, was also secret. Pratt and Company was to continue operating under its own name, ostensibly the Standard's chief rival in New York.

On March 10 of the following year, 1875, the

Standard Oil Company's capitalization was increased from $2,500,000 to $3,500,000. There were more than a dozen new stockholders, including W. H. Vanderbilt and John Huntington, the gravel roof man.

The Pratt purchase was of tremendous importance to Rockefeller. Charles Pratt was not only a great money-maker but a man of unusual force, as was Rogers. In addition, "H. H." was lovable and had weaknesses that were very human. Rogers was the grandfather of the Millicent Rogers of our tabloid times, whose marital adventures have consumed a whole forest of pulp paper.

It is one of the ironies of fate that the pious Rockefeller billion and its allied millions have produced more scandals, vanities and follies than the combined abilities of Messrs. George White, Earl Carroll and Florenz Ziegfeld!

Soon after he had increased his capitalization to $3,500,000, Rockefeller announced that all refiners would be welcomed into the Central Association provided they would lease their plants for a definite period and subscribe to stock. The refiner could continue manufacturing as an independent entity *but* (here was the catch) he must delegate to the executive com-

mittee of the Association (i. e., John D.) irrevocable authority to purchase crude oil, sell refined, allot the amount to be manufactured by each member of the pool *and* to negotiate for rates with the railroads and pipe lines.

The arrangement gave the Rockefeller allies in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and New York the same opportunity the thieving South Improvement Company had given Rockefeller in 1872 to swallow his Cleveland rivals. Warden, Lockhart and the others took full advantage. They did their work so well that soon H. H. Rogers told *The New York Tribune,* blandly, that nine-tenths of the country's refining interests were in the scheme and that the price of oil "to yield a fair profit" should be advanced from fifteen to twenty-five cents a gallon.

Rockefeller played fair with his new associates, demanding and securing for them from the New York Central and the Erie the same ten per cent secret rebate the Standard was enjoying. He presented a similar demand to the Pennsylvania, with similarly satisfactory results. Col. Joseph D. Potts objected. He was president of the great Empire Transportation Company, pipe line ally of the Pennsylvania. Col. Potts was suspicious of the expressed

beneficent desire of the Rockefeller coalition to gather all oil interests under their wings.

"Their unselfish language soothed all alarm into quiet slumbering," wrote Col. Potts later. "It resembled the gentle fanning of the vampire's wings, and it had the same end in view—the undisturbed abstraction of the victim's blood."

But the implacable, relentless Rockefeller had his way. Everywhere refineries sold or leased to his Central Association. When necessary, "pressure" was applied. A man's trade was attacked. He was undersold. Tank cars were refused by rail carriers friendly to the Rockefeller combination. The refineries of the Oil Regions, many of which were owned by producers, were the last to yield. These refineries bluntly refused to have anything to do with any scheme engineered by Rockefeller.

John D. smiled behind his moustache and sent John D. Archbold to the Creek. Archbold was his latest recruit. He came to his familiar stamping ground representing, he said, a new and independent company, Acme Oil. Acme, in reality, was owned by Standard men. Within three years Archbold had bought for his new master, or put out of commission, practically every refinery in the Oil Regions. Inde-

pendents found themselves unable to ship at a profit. Some deadly force, something one could not fight, because one could not drag it into the light, blocked their every move.

The story was the same in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York: intimidation, persuasion, force. Refineries fell like ten pins before the Rockefeller assault. John D. himself remained in New York and directed the disposition of the recruits. If a plant was in good condition and advantageously situated, the chairman of the Central Association's executive committee assigned it a definite quota of manufacture. If not of stragetic importance, it was scrapped.

All purchases of crude, all sales of refined, all dickers with the railroads were in John D.'s hands. Contracts were executed with the strict secrecy that marked the man's every move. Once Rockefeller summoned an independent refiner to his home in Cleveland at night and bound him to a ten-year contract, guaranteeing splendidly increased profits. "But," John D. whispered, "you must keep this contract secret even from your wife. When you begin to make more money, don't let anybody know it. Don't put on any more style. You have no ambition to drive fast horses, have you?"

Needless to say, this refiner was not Frank Rockefeller. John D.'s younger brother had gone into refining on his own and was barely managing to keep afloat his concern—the Pioneer Oil Company. Whenever there was a public probe of the Standard (and there have been dozens) Frank always attended without subpoena and eagerly awaited an opportunity to denounce his brother. Generally, John D.'s only reply was: "Poor Frank, I carried him in my arms when he was a baby."

Within a year the Central Association was riding high. However, one element threatened its complete suzerainty. This was the powerful Empire Pipe Line.

The Empire's sole rivals were lines owned by the Standard: the American Transfer Company and the United Pipe Lines. Rockefeller had entered reluctantly and, of course, secretly into pipe line construction back in 1872. On his part it was purely a precautionary measure. He did not want another boycott to cut off his supply of crude as had happened in the thick of the South Improvement warfare.

By 1876, the Standard controlled forty per cent of the pipe lines in the Oil Regions as well as holding title to practically all the tank cars

on both Central and Erie systems. The superintendent of the Rockefeller pipe lines was Daniel O'Day, a scrappy, hell-to-breakfast young Irishman, who later became a power in Standard Oil. O'Day was a rough and tumble fighter. Men followed him blindly. Women adored him. For a time he had been in the service of Jay Gould and had diverted much oil traffic from the Pennsylvania to the Erie. The bearded overlord of the Erie first met him when he came into the Gould private car, on the Titusville siding, in overalls and grimy with toil. His lack of self consciousness impressed itself tremendously upon the saturnine sultan of the Erie. This was the man, who was fighting the Empire, on behalf of Rockefeller, for a share of lucrative pipe line trade.

The extremely able Empire president, Col. Potts, as we have seen, had been overruled abruptly in 1875 when he opposed the granting of a rebate to the Standard combination by his ally, the Pennsylvania Railroad. Potts quietly decided to build up some more business for the Empire by buying into several of the remaining independent seaboard refineries.

When Rockefeller learned (and depend upon it, he learned immediately!) that Potts had purchased two refineries, he was as mad as a

hornet. He buzzed into the offices of Tom Scott, president of the Pennsylvania, and of A. J. Cassatt, then third vice-president in charge of transportation, and protested bitterly. "Here, I have gone out of my way," said the outraged John D., "to be friendly to the Pennsylvania in the allottment of oil shipments and now you gentlemen are permitting your associate, Col. Potts, actually to invade the Central Association's field. Why, it is nothing more nor less than piracy! You must call off this poacher, Potts."

John D., it is said, was closer to apoplexy than he ever had been in his twenty-one year business career. A stenographic record of this conference would have been worth preserving. Rockefeller, they say, even quoted Scripture to Scott and Cassatt. But Old Tom and A. J. stood firm. They couldn't see that the Empire had done anything so dreadful in buying a couple of Philadelphia and New York refineries. Hadn't Rockefeller bought up or built many hundreds of miles of pipe lines? Wasn't his own shoe more pinching than that of Potts?

Truth is, Scott and Cassatt were beginning to take fright at Rockefeller's growing power. They were keen minds. They had begun to wonder whether the great Pennsylvania Rail-

road—itself bitterly attacked as an Octopus—would eventually become enclosed in the greedy coils of the Rockefeller Anaconda.

So they sent John D. away—the latter in a mood almost smoking. The war was on. It lasted almost eighteen months. The Standard, of course, withdrew every ounce of freight from the Pennsylvania. The Erie and Central, Rockefeller allies, cut rates and enticed independents from the Pennsy. Here was the opportunity of the century for the three systems to combine and bring Rockefeller to heel. But the roads were gangrened with jealousy. John D. profited.

Despite grievous losses, the Pennsylvania remained strong and full of fight until the summer of 1877. Then a general strike tied up its traffic for weeks. Pittsburgh mobs destroyed a vast amount of property. The road lost millions and for the first time had to pass dividends. Providence was with the righteous, John D. murmured happily.

To shorten a lengthy story, Cassatt went to Cleveland in the late summer of '77, saw Rockefeller and Flagler and sued for peace. On October 17, 1877, the Standard Oil Company purchased the Empire Transportation Company's pipe lines, refining interests, tank

cars and personal property for $3,400,000. Of this vast sum, $2,500,000 was paid immediately in certified checks.

Where did this money come from? It had been extorted in a dramatic hold-up of oil exporters the preceding winter! Anticipating a longer drawn out fight with the Pennsylvania and the Empire, Rockefeller and his associates had calmly decided to tax the world to pay for the sinews of battle.

They kept a great fleet of oil carrying vessels waiting weeks and months in New York harbor until the exporters paid their price. This price represented an average profit of no less than twenty cents a gallon! The swag ran into the multi-millions. The year following this spectacular raid upon the markets of the world, Standard Oil paid a dividend of fifty per cent.

"We could have thrown that dividend out twice over and still made a profit," Samuel Andrews boasted before an Ohio investigating committee in 1879.

The "exigencies" of the "particular situation," according to John D., required a huge war chest. Yet he says today: "Throughout our business career, our sole purpose was to

cheapen our product by wide distribution over the broadest possible territory."

In 1877, then, a birdseye view of the situation would disclose John D. and his chosen scuttlers as practically the sole oil gatherers, transporters, refiners, sellers. Now, Rockefeller rubbed it in on the beaten Pennsylvania by demanding and receiving a drawback of not less than twenty cents a barrel upon every barrel of independent oil carried by the system. Daniel O'Day wrote Cassatt bluntly that this pleasant boon had been bestowed upon the Standard by the Central and the Erie. The Pennsylvania meekly bent its head and murmured: "Allah."

Was there no opposition to hinder the path of the onrushing Rockefeller juggernaut? A little. There was some energy left in the crippled carcasses of the men of the Oil Regions. They determined to appeal to the courts. The decision was speeded by what has become known as the "immediate shipment" order. The Standard buyer on the Creek, Jabez Bostwick (the same who was a director in the South Improvement Company) shocked the producers of the new and gushing Bradford field by proclaiming that no oil would be

run through Standard pipes unless sold for "immediate shipment," not to be held for storage as had been customary. Bostwick further asserted he would buy no oil unless offered at less than the market price.

This was the last straw. The producers rioted. Hissing crowds gathered about the Standard receiving stations. An organization very much like the earlier and original Ku Klux Klan sprang into existence over night. A committee posted off to Harrisburg, the state capital. Governor Hartranft came to Oil City in person to find out what the disturbance was about. He pledged support in the oil men's battle for independence.

The situation came to a climax on April 29, 1879, when the Grand Jury of Clarion County indicted John D. Rockefeller, William Rockefeller, Jabez A. Bostwick, Daniel O'Day, William G. Warden, Charles Lockhart, Henry M. Flagler, Jacob J. Vandergrift and George W. Girty, cashier of the Standard Oil Company. The indictment charged conspiracy, oppression, extortion. The Rockefellers and the others not resident in Pennsylvania refused to submit to extradition.

"This case will never be brought to trial," asserted John D. calmly.

Meanwhile, civil investigations of his oblique activities had been launched in New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. These brought into sharp relief the practices of Rockefeller and associates. The Hepburn Commission of the New York State Legislature bitterly arraigned the Standard Oil Company as "a mysterious organization whose business and transactions are of such a character that its members decline giving a history or description of it lest this testimony be used to convict them of a crime."

John D.'s prediction, as to the outcome of the criminal indictments, proved true. Mysterious influences appeared on the Standard side. The year following, 1880, the producers, worn out and disorganized, accepted a pledge from Rockefeller to cease the practices complained of. Though past experience had abundantly taught them that the master of the oil industry spoke only with his lips, the producers consented to withdrawal of the suits.

In her brilliant and exhaustive "History of the Standard Oil Company," Ida M. Tarbell points out that by 1884 the Oil Regions looked upon John Rockefeller "with superstitious awe. Their notion of him was very like that which the English common people had for

Napoleon in the first part of the 19th century, which the peasants of Brittany have even today for the English—a dread power, cruel, omniscient, always ready to spring."

Always John D. was poised to spring at the other fellow's pocketbook and in defense of his own. One day, in a Cleveland street car, a lady whom he knew sat beside him. Rockefeller handed the conductor a quarter. The latter returned fifteen cents change. "You have made a mistake, my friend," insisted Rockefeller. "Aren't you paying two fares?" asked the conductor. "No," returned Rockefeller shortly. "Let this be a lesson to you, young man. Never take anything for granted." Flushing painfully, the lady fished out a nickel and paid her own fare.

John D. never overlooked "trifles that make perfection," in the phrase of Michaelangelo. He nourished his nickels as he did his millions. For he was on his way, and rapidly, to becoming the world's first billionaire.

VI

THE MALEVOLENT TRUST—RAKING IN A BILLION

IN Chinese villages almond-eyed urchins, barefoot, followed the gay wagons of the Standard Oil Company and eagerly exchanged mounds of brass and copper coins for kerosene. Each child clung closely to his precious quota. For he knew the wonderful fluid from faraway America would relieve his task of tending the smutty, smelly wicks dipped in fish oil by which the family's bamboo hut had previously been fitfully illumined.

Now mellow lights glowed in the Chinese night. As a gift from the Gods, the great Standard Oil Company distributed glass lamps and John Chinaman and Mrs. John were required merely to pour into the mirific contrivance some of the potent illuminant from over the sea. Shades of Confucius, miracles had again come to the earth!

The Standard Oil Company was soon known throughout the Orient as the Light of Asia.

In China the natives called it, colloquially, *Mei Fooey.*

The story was the same the world over. A genie was casting light into dark places. The genie had drawn a secret from Mother Nature and was sharing it (at a price) with the peoples of the far lands, brown or yellow, dark or fair.

The scene in the Chinese villages of the late '80's and the '90's might have been observed in duplicate everywhere: on the veldt of South Africa, the sheep ranges of Australia, the pampas of the Argentine.

John D. Rockefeller was at work piling up his billion. A billion and a good deal more.

With monopolistic control over a product for which the world pined, the great bookkeeper had simply put pencil to paper and proceeded accordingly. He organized his overseas marketing departments, retail and wholesale, with the same uncanny thoroughness with which he was selling oil direct to the housewife in every hamlet in America. He now had a strangle hold upon the manufacture and distribution of petroleum. Also, he had ventured into the hazardous field of production sufficiently to guard against sniping by a possible renewed coalition of the cursing, sorely tried well owners of the Oil Regions. John D. and

Nature had seemingly formed an omnipotent alliance.

Rockefeller was now Oil. He had knit his rigidly ruled companies into a Trust and chartered a giant holding company under the extremely friendly laws of New Jersey. The holding corporation was the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. John D. and his coterie of selected allies held practically all the stock in the New Jersey Standard which, in turn, owned every share in subsidiaries scattered throughout the country. Eventually the subsidiaries numbered thirty-three.

Rockefeller operated under a charter that gave him even wider latitude than that of the mulcting South Improvement Company, destroyed by outraged protest in 1872. The South Improvement scheme was dead but Rockefeller had never wavered an instant in his determination to apply and profit by that plan's primal principle: railroad discrimination.

Unyielding insistence upon the rebate and the drawback, even more than other methods of ruining its rivals, slowly coagulated a cloud of suspicion and hatred about John D.'s trust. As an organization, Standard Oil was legitimately great. It paid its men well, its bills promptly. In many instances it served the

public efficiently, though it tended to charge all the traffic would bear. It brought gold into the country by the millions. But it was crooked. Eventually the dark cloud became a whirlwind. Rockefeller was all but swept into a cell; and expediency forced him to disgorge his beloved dollars almost as fast as he had accumulated them.

The Oil Trust, under the able direction of its sly, mysterious originator, was a super-government of its own. It was organized like the national government but with one striking difference: the people had no say. Standard Oil, commercially speaking, was not merely an aggregation of miscellaneous concerns. It was a carefully adjusted single machine for handling and refining the oil of America. Its value depended upon a nice adjustment and economy of its parts which was the wonder of the commercial world.

Its very greatness contained the seeds of destruction. Because it was essentially crooked and did not hesitate to debauch and corrupt at the dictation of self-interest, it exposed itself to blackmail. "Standard baiting" was a popular sport of politicians for a generation. Many a man rode into office astride the Standard goat. Later the demagogue often sold out to

the trust. Upon the trust's secret payroll, at one time or another, were men who wore even the toga of United States senators.

Such scandalous situations can scarcely be prevented when private citizens deliberately defy the moral and legal codes of organized society. It is surprising that so prescient a person as John D. Rockefeller should have adopted an attitude toward his fellow man comparable in many respects only with that of the last of the ruling Hohenzollerns.

Remember, though, that this man's astonishing mental powers were concentrated entirely upon the attainment of great wealth. There was no room for social or political theory. "Sane in every respect save one—he is money mad!" once exclaimed Marcus Alonzo Hanna, who had known John D. from boyhood. Hanna was assuredly not prejudiced against Rockefeller. Until his death he was one of the Oil Trust's most faithful servants, both as political boss of Ohio and of the nation, and as a Senator of the United States.

Rockefeller *was* money mad. Since the organization of his first corporation, this financial wizard had retained by far the largest blocks of stock in his own hands. Individually, he owned more than one quarter of the stock

of the Standard Oil of New Jersey, brood mother of his trust. William Rockefeller, Henry M. Flagler and a handful of picked men held most of the remainder.

The men Rockefeller and Flagler had gathered about them were both canny and brilliant. They were not great men in the sense in which Lincoln and Spinoza and Savonarola were great. Greatness is not a matter of mere appetite. But they were great in that they accomplished great things: great in their grasp of opportunity. They saw a chance to coast into extreme wealth and power by coupling their destinies with control of a product Nature was pouring out so prodigally. They leaped at the opportunity and became wealthy and powerful beyond the dreams of any prince of Cathay, any nabob of the Arabian Nights.

However, John D. and his chosen cabinet were men of very definite limitations. In fact, if one could have seen them together, stripped of the visible symbols of their power, unprotected by the deference of underlings and servitors, it would have been impossible for any but an omniscient eye to discover the unusual in them. Seen thus—perhaps in the swimming pool of a local Y. M. C. A.—they would have impressed an observer much as would any

similar group of master plumbers or corner grocers. Few of them possessed that curious quality termed gentility. Without exception, almost, they were self-made men. They were tough oaks, ax-scarred, hard-cored. Not for them the effeminate fields of art, philosophy, literature. They were practical men. They had seen and they had taken.

The bosses of oil sat in daily luncheon conference in a stony retreat at 26 Broadway. The building was rectangular and resembled nothing so much as a substantial county jail tilted on end. It became the commercial capital of the world, yet it was a gloomy citadel. Occasionally Mark Twain, Chauncey M. Depew or other noted satirists were invited for luncheon, and launched the shafts of their wit. They departed shivering.

At the head table sat sixteen men. Rockefeller is the only survivor. The seating list is interesting. John D. did not preside as one might suppose. The place of honor was reserved for Charles M. Pratt. At Pratt's right came Henry M. Flagler, John D. Rockefeller, John D. Archbold, J. A. Bostwick, E. J. Pouch, John Bushnell, Paul Babcock. On the left were: H. H. Rogers, William Rockefeller, Thomas Bushnell, Benjamin Brewster, F. Q.

Barstow, J. Crowell, J. H. Alexander. At the foot of the table sat James McGee.

Charles Pratt was able, and narrow. Son of a New England cabinet maker, he had been a devout Baptist from boyhood. He was apprenticed and trained a machinist. Chance led him into oil. He evolved "Pratt's Astral Oil" and won a fortune. He started a pioneer New York refinery. Later, when greater wealth poured in, he founded Pratt Institute. He became first citizen of the old city of Brooklyn.

H. H. Rogers, Pratt's partner, was the only wit at the table. Rogers began life as a grocery clerk in Fairhaven, Mass. He was many-sided and usually genial. When in the mood, he liked a joke. One minute he was approachable, friendly, backslapping; the next sarcastic, bitter, jeering. Those who worked under him asserted his eyes could change from blue to green, then to black or red according to the humor of the moment.

John D. had no difficulty cracking the whip over these men of the Old Guard. Itching natures urged them to follow where he led. For they recognized that it was his genius that was pouring gold into their pockets. Bland, propitiating, the master utilitarian of the age dominated his piratical outfit, without in the

least seeming to. Silent, repressed, tense, this man with perhaps the finest organizing brain since Napoleon, dictated most of the important decisions.

His rough mates respected and feared him. Occasionally he unbent and told a story. They listened eagerly and wonderingly. One yarn concerned an Irish employe of Rockefeller and Andrews. He was lighting his pipe when a big tank exploded with a roar that could be heard for miles. When the smoke had cleared and other workmen had come to collect the fragments of Pat's body, the Irishman paused in igniting the tobacco in his corncob and remarked: "The thing purty nigh scared me."

The young son of one of the sixteen once interrupted the sombre mid-day scene. His father and the others were in earnest discussion. Finally Rockefeller noticed him and started in surprise. Calling the boy to his side, John D. asked him to go out and get him a bag of nuts. The search consumed half an hour. When he returned Rockefeller patted him on the head, gave him a nickel and told him he was a smart lad. "I don't know whether Mr. Rockefeller was really fond of nuts or whether he was afraid I'd overhear his plans," laughed

the messenger, now a man of middle age and excessively wealthy, in relating the incident.

Devoting the luncheon hour to business was one of a thousand Rockefeller waste eliminators. Nothing was too trivial to escape John D.'s attention. Any one who could show him how to save a penny received warm welcome from the president of Standard Oil.

An expert in the trust's Brooklyn canning works demonstrated that the number of drops of solder necessary to fasten the lid on a can of oil could be reduced from forty to thirty-nine. John D. almost hugged him, and, of course, ordered the change made. The trifling innovation saved thousands of dollars a year.

One dull day an office boy named W. E. Bemis took out a pencil and figured on a scrap of paper the cost of manufacturing a gallon of kerosene. Timidly he carried the figures in to Mr. Rockefeller. John D. was surprised. Strange to relate, he had never thought of working out unit costs in this manner. The office boy's chance idea resulted in the establishment of the first statistical bureau known to American business. Bemis died a vice president of the Standard Oil Company of New York. Rockefeller entrusted him to plant the Standard flag overseas; and it was Bemis who,

years afterward, waged a bitter trade war in the Far East with Henri Deterding, of the Royal Dutch.

The Standard directors were an active, working board. Rockefeller kept in minute touch with the gigantic enterprises and he wanted his directors to do likewise. This innovation was later adopted in almost every huge commercial organization. Another departure from accepted rule was the selection of two heads for each of the four great Standard divisions — production, transportation, manufacture, marketing. The plan kept men in constant competition. Also, there was always at least one department chief to handle any crisis, immediately.

Never for an instant did Rockefeller slacken his quest for special privileges. Surrounded by men as predatory as himself, he trampled competitors as a bull elephant. He continued to demand and secure dark-lantern railway advantages. He harassed the few independent producers and refiners who still dared risk economic extinction by refusal to submit to him. He raised or lowered prices in various communities at will, cut to kill, undersold, boosted,

boomed, depressed, terrorized. Always he operated in the dark.

Sometimes the price of oil would vary as much as ten cents a gallon in adjoining counties. The price would be mysteriously raised in places where there was no competition; lowered, sometimes even below the cost of production, when there were competitors. The great Standard machine rolled on, remorselessly.

Yet, in his personal life, the artful Rockefeller was a "good" man. He could perform kind, if curious, deeds. Frequently, a bundle of clothing or a pair of shoes would arrive at the door of some old acquaintance who was down in luck. "Have these shoes recobbled and they will last another year," read one note from the pious president of the Standard Oil.

Rockefeller commuted between New York and Cleveland. His New York home was a dour mansion at 4 West Fifty-fourth street, just around the corner from Fifth avenue. Socially, and purely from choice, John D. has always remained "just around the corner" from Fifth avenue. Here he reared his children in Draconian simplicity.

The Cleveland home, Forest Hill, was a monument of architectural ugliness, built orig-

inally as a sanitorium, but set in a four hundred acre park of lovely woodland. In his free moments, Rockefeller occupied himself arranging new landscape effects. Only broad rich acres could lure our man of figures back to simplicities.

The stark ugliness of the New York house was relieved somewhat by formal gardens, occupying precious space on either side of the mansion. An artificial skating pond afforded Rockfeller opportunity to indulge, of nights, in his favorite winter sport. As his daughters and his son grew into adolescence, John D. taught them to skate. This had been the most enjoyable recreation of his childhood.

"In my boyhood," says John D., "mother forbade William and myself to skate at night. Once we could not resist the appeal of the moonlight. We slipped down to the lake and had just begun to spin around when we heard a cry for help. A neighbor had broken through the ice. We pushed a pole to him and succeeded in fishing him out. We thought we should be let off without punishment but mother gave us a good tanning, nevertheless."

In the early nineties, John and William Rockefeller often walked from their homes

to the Standard offices. They began to be remarked. New York was much taken up with other and more showy fortunes, so luxuries rare to the very rich—escape from personal publicity and indulgence in simple ways —were still open to Rockefeller. But not long. Soon the newspapers realized that this silent, retiring man had grown far richer than the Goulds, Vanderbilts or Astors. The papers began to pry.

The inquiries were futile. Rockefeller was not to be interviewed. Nor were his business associates talkative. There was no directory of names or offices in the Standard building and those cornered in the corridors were brusque to the point of rudeness.

But John D. had created a situation that could be no more ignored than the weather. Gradually it was realized that here was an astonishing person who had built an effective monopoly in a great necessity of life and was able at will to set his own price upon it. Evidence of his power poured in from everywhere.

So the newspapers plugged away and eventually tore off Rockefeller's camouflage of concealment. The metropolitan press of the eighties and nineties indulged in no weasel

words in characterizing Standard Oil methods and manners.

Rockefeller was painted as a buccaneer, unscrupulously proceeding to erect a commercial oligarchy that might ultimately threaten society itself. The blunt words of Cromwell were quoted: "That which maketh the one rich and the many poor suiteth not a commonwealth."

Brilliant journalists pursued John D. Denied access, they drubbed him unmercifully. Rockefeller received the attacks cynically and proceeded to steam roller rivals, stifle opposition and strengthen the Standard until it should become an impregnable Gibraltar.

But the deluge was not far off. The remnant of independent men in the oil industry—they controlled less than fifteen per cent—had been crying their wrongs over the years into whatever ears would listen. Investigations had been launched and had fizzled out in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and elsewhere. New state and Federal anti-trust laws crowded the statute books but some mysteriously effective machine prevented enforcement.

Then came events beyond Rockefeller's control. In the fall of 1901, President McKinley,

protege of Mark Hanna, was assassinated and Theodore Roosevelt succeeded to the presidency. Roosevelt was an opportunist of opportunists, but a warm man and, in social and political thought, the very antithesis of Rockefeller. Sooner or later, in his administration, Standard Oil and Standard methods were bound to come in for an airing. From John D.'s standpoint, a "dangerous" man was in the White House. So it proved. Roosevelt raised the curtain upon the spectacular era of the muckrake, the Big Stick and the trust buster.

It was an aging, physically weakened Rockefeller who prepared for the combat. His nervous and digestive systems were shattered. Upon pain of death he had retired to his orchards and passed many hours at golf and wheeling. Still, though, he managed, through private wires, to keep in close touch with 26 Broadway.

Rockefeller had become the most detested man in the country. Now, he appeared to realize the extent of the opprobrium for the first time. Feebly, he made some effort to propitiate public opinion. For some years, as criticism swirled about him, he had given various sums to religious and educational

causes. Now, he offered an additional $100,000 to a church organization. A Congregational minister solemnly protested its acceptance, holding the money had not been cleanly accumulated. Other pulpits and the press caught up the issue. For months a thunderous controversy raged over the question of "tainted" money. School pupils debated Rockefeller ethics, publicists issued lengthy statements, vaudeville comedians cracked jokes. "Sure John D.'s money is tainted—'taint for you and 'taint for me!"

In 1904, Ida M. Tarbell's epochal *History of the Standard Oil Company* exposed Rockefeller's business practices in detail. Roosevelt was elected that fall to a full term, largely upon his pledge to curb monopolies. It was inevitable the government and Standard Oil would lock horns in what seemed certain would develop into a struggle to the death.

The government fired first, charging that the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, the trust's huge central western manufacturing and distributing unit, had received one thousand four hundred and sixty-two separate rebates from the Chicago and Alton Railroad. Simply stated, the alleged crime consisted in having paid six cents freight per hundred pounds,

instead of eighteen cents. Over the passage of five-and-thirty years came an echo of the ancient South Improvement scheme!

So thoroughly, by this time, had the sins of the Standard and of Rockefeller been shouted to the world that twenty-eight of the forty-six states had literally outlawed all trusts possessing monopolistic power. Ten of the states imposed fines only. The others threatened imprisonment as well. Under a then recent Texas law, a man could be imprisoned for ten years merely for selling a gallon of Standard Oil! This was one vengeful result of John D.'s methods.

The case against the Standard of Indiana was tried in Chicago before Federal Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, now professional baseball's one man court of final appeal. Landis imposed upon the trust an unparalleled, almost unthinkable fine of $29,240,000. The penalty, based more upon public opinion than upon law, did not stand. But its chastening effect was enormous. The decision jolted John D. as he had never before been jolted.

The most dramatic event of the trial came when Rockefeller, under bitter protest, was forced into the witness box. It was a striking

scene — a "daggers-and-hushed-music" situation—when the richest man in the world came face to face with the most flamboyant judge in Illinois. Rockefeller looked at Landis and saw a slight, nervous man with a thin, intense face, pallid under a mass of prematurely whitened hair. Landis looked at Rockefeller and saw a tallish, aging man, slightly bent, with absolutely hairless face, pointed chin, pale blue eyes and large, well-shaped head. Each was plainly uncomfortable in the presence of the other.

As a witness, the master mind of Standard Oil was a failure. He believed the government had no more right to search his head than his strong box. Apparently everyone else in the courtroom knew more about Standard Oil than he. He "believed" that the Standard had refineries and that it refined oil. But there was no ring of authority in his voice. "I do not know what refineries there are," he said. Neither was he sure about the amount of its capital but hazarded, unwillingly: "I think it is a hundred million."

A few minutes later the facts Rockefeller had refused were dragged from Charles M. Pratt, veteran secretary of the trust. Pratt's lips pinched the words but he made known

the tremendous profits of Standard Oil during the years of the alleged rebate: $57,000,000 in 1905! $62,000,000 in 1904! $81,000,000 in 1903!

The eyes of Judge Landis glinted satisfaction. Now he could make the punishment fit the criminal—not the crime. He gave the trust lawyers opportunity to abandon their policy of evasion, asking them formally if they wished to submit any evidence of honest intentions and general good character of Standard Oil.

At this point there was a clash among the Oil Kings themselves. John D. Archbold was in favor of publicity. Others counseled: "No, let us stick to the old Standard Oil policy—'say nothing and saw wood.' That is John Rockefeller's advice and his advice has always been best." The "noes" won. The trust lawyers returned a stinging answer to Judge Landis: "This court, in the absence of anything in the record to the contrary, paying no attention to the gossip of the street or the charges of the mob, and guided by the fundamental law of the land, must certainly presume the innocence of this defendant of any prior violation of the Interstate Commerce Law, and fix

its penalties, if any, upon the record in this case."

Several weeks later Judge Landis read his sentence. It was a hot stifling day in August (1907), but there were a thousand people packed in the courtroom. The judge was pale and tense. In a tone as cold as the ice caves of the Arctic, he referred to the "studied insolence" of the trust lawyers.

Every paragraph of this remarkable sentence was more vitriolic than the last. Swish! Crack! The whip was laid upon Standard Oil as though it were the origin of evil or the instigator of the San Francisco earthquake. "You wound society more deeply," Landis cried, "than does he who counterfeits the coin or steals letters from the mail." Even after he had inflicted the heaviest fine in history, the court expressed regret at the "inadequacy of the punishment"; and declared that if he could have his will the offending oil kings would be flung, like common felons, into jail.

The amount of the Landis fine was so tremendous that the entire world of commerce was stunned. The penalty, it was generally held, was an inducing cause of the 1907 panic. The trust buster was in the saddle. Was he strong enough to pull down the Standard Oil

Company? Comparisons were raised. Did not Jefferson destroy our shipping with his embargo ? Did not Andrew Jackson smash the United States Bank, the most powerful moneyed institution of his time? Was not the Whiskey Ring demolished in Grant's second term? Had not Roosevelt just smitten the Northern Securities merger with his Big Stick so that it fell to pieces like a house of cards?

John D. sat back and pondered. No matter what happened, he would never have to wend his way over the hill to the poorhouse. Oil was not the only string upon his bow. As far back as the early nineties he had invested heavily in lead, copper, iron ore, railroads, banks and business enterprises of a thousand kinds. He had diverted his huge reservoir of oil won cash into many channels where profits could reasonably be expected.

The panic of 1893 had increased his wealth enormously, enabling him to make cheap investments. His investments in iron ore began when he purchased the Minnesota Iron Company during the panic. At that time most wealthy men were pressed for money. Not John D. He continued to extend his holdings, acquiring, among other properties, the great

Mesaba Range, as well as some of the best southern mines. All of these were later put into the Steel Trust.

John D. never lost his head. When the market was lowest he unhesitatingly hypothecated many of his securities in order to shop at a bargain. His resources were easily sufficient not only for the purchase but for the rehabilitation of the tottering concerns. Everything he did was done on a broad scale. In commerce he thought in empires and continents just as had Napoleon and Cecil Rhodes in other fields.

In the fall of 1893, after he had paid, comparatively speaking, scarcely more than the proverbial song for his vast Lake Superior ore lands, he summoned to his New York mansion Samuel Mather, a Cleveland competitor, and coolly proposed that Mather build for him a dozen huge ore-carrying ships. The very audacity of the proposal won Mather. He returned to Cleveland and wrote to the starving shipyards along the Lakes that he would consider bids for one or at most two ore carriers, to be completed at opening of navigation the following spring.

"Mr. Mather did his work well," recalls John D. with relish. "The bidders appeared

in Cleveland on the day the contracts were to be let. Mr. Mather took them separately into his office and got the very lowest figure. He promised to notify each gentleman at the hotel. That afternoon Mather sent little notes to all, assigning a contract for at least one ship to every bidder. The lucky men rushed to the lobby, intent upon sympathizing with their rivals only to discover that everyone had won a contract but at a much lower figure than if it had been generally known we needed a dozen vessels. Mr. Mather was very clever."

With a grim smile, John D. adds: "However, these amiable shipbuilders soon united in one company and we had to pay more for our subsequent ships."

When he speaks of his larger projects, John D. invariably employs the nominative plural of the personal pronoun.

For seven years Rockefeller drew splendid profits from his side line investment in iron ore. Then came the organization of the Steel Corporation by J. Pierpont Morgan, the elder. On an afternoon in March, 1901, details of the steel merger were almost completed. Morgan turned to his adviser, Elbert H. Gary, and remarked: "Well, guess we are about through, Judge."

Gary disagreed. "We ought to have the Lake Superior Consolidated Ore Mines," he advised.

"Rockefeller owns those," grunted Morgan. "We don't want them."

"We ought to have them," pressed Gary. "Why don't you see Mr. Rockefeller and make him an offer?"

Morgan grunted again. "I don't like the man," he finally exploded. "Don't want to have any dealings with him."

Gary conciliated and argued. At last Morgan arranged a conference for that evening with Rockefeller. Gary advised Morgan to bid $150,000,000 for the ore properties and ships but not to go above $200,000,000 "as an outside limit." That night Morgan and Rockefeller met at the latter's home. Next noon Morgan strode into his office at Broad and Wall streets and told Gary jubilantly: "Well, Rockefeller's in! I paid him $205,000,000." Gary thought Rockefeller had driven a hard bargain. It may be worth noting that Morgan, who was not without experience in finance, was proud of the deal by which he paid $5,000,000 more than his "outside limit."

John D. took most of the purchase price in Steel Corporation stock, which was increased

from $850,000,000 to $1,100,000,000. It thus became the first corporation capitalized at a billion or more. Rockefeller and his son went on the Steel Trust board. Only John D. knows how much his side line "dip" into ore lands has yielded.

Coincident with the Landis drama, the government started suit in the Federal court in Missouri to dissolve Standard Oil. This suit was prosecuted by Roosevelt's chief trust buster, Frank B. Kellogg. It consumed almost five years and was successful. The trust was ordered to separate into its original units. It seemed as though Rockefeller's life work was to be undone. In reality the dissolution decree coined another huge fortune for John D.; and made it almost a matter of self-preservation for him to distribute great portions of his wealth.

VII

THE BENEVOLENT TRUST—LADLING OUT THE BILLION

ON May 15, 1911, the world awaited breathlessly, a momentous decision of the Supreme Court of the United States. The decision came in the early afternoon. To the far corners of the earth was flashed the news: "Oil Trust Ordered Dissolved!" "Supreme Court Destroys Country's Greatest Secret Menace!" "Hidden Power of Wall Street Smashed!"

In a way, it was true. The preeminent court of the land asserted, solemnly, that John D. Rockefeller, six associates, and a closely coordinated trust called Standard Oil had illegally seized the second greatest mineral product of the country and were converting it into mountainous private fortunes.

The Supreme Court found the great Rockefeller monopoly "guilty as charged." It had consummated "unfair practice" contracts by the thousands. It had "restrained trade," had blackjacked the railroads into favorable dis-

crimination. It was swollen with inordinate profits; was Czaristic in its division of territory among companies of its exclusive group.

"There is but one way by which this frightful organization may make restitution," said the Court, in effect. "It must resolve into its original units and restore free competition in the oil industry."

The epochal impeachment followed five years of litigation, launched first in the Federal courts of Missouri. President Roosevelt's tenacious trust-busters, Kellogg, of Minnesota, and Hadley, of Missouri, had taken eleven million words of testimony. Such evidence as was drawn from Rockefeller and his associates was slippery and reluctant.

For months and months, the justices of the Supreme Court pored over the problem; then concluded:

"Seven men and a corporate machine have conspired against their fellow citizens. For the safety of the Republic we now decree that this dangerous conspiracy must be ended by November 15."

The seven men were the trust directors: John D. Rockefeller, his brother William Rockefeller, Henry M. Flagler, Oliver H.

Payne, Charles Pratt, H. H. Rogers, John D. Archbold.

The corporate machine was the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey and thirty-three subsidiaries.

In the public mind there was one conspirator-in-chief: John D. Rockefeller. Years earlier, John D. had retired, theoretically, and was sedulously hunting health and longevity amid the pleasing confines of three lovely estates. He had, however, retained the presidency of his gargantuan monopoly. His voice came almost hourly, over private wires, into 26 Broadway, directing, advising, instructing.

John D.'s temporary physical decline had not, in the least, muddied his mentality. His commercial principles were unchanged: to the ablest belong the spoils. He looked upon the government's prosecution as an unwarranted intrusion into private affairs.

But he saw that seeming obeisance must be made to the highest of high courts. He was facing a new force. Could he overcome it (as he had always overcome every obstacle) by chicanery, by some devious device? A smile wreathed his thin lips as he studied the decision of the Supreme Court.

That period of ill-health had been valuable.

During days of torture and nights of insomnia, John D. had time for reflection. He recognized by now, sadly, that he was the most hated man alive. Threats against his person and his property had come to him by the thousands over the years. He had shaken them off, set them down as jealousy or patent abnormality. He had hired a bodyguard, sat between two others when he motored, always kept his back to the wall (when possible) at infrequent public appearances.

But, in the relentless eleven million words of testimony elicited by Kellogg and Hadley, there were accusations that stung. Keepers of tiny stores had placed their hands upon the Bible and sworn their business had been snuffed out because they had dared deal with independent oil refiners. Standard Oil, at times, had even given away kerosene to stifle competition. Mighty railway magnates had testified: "We yielded to the Standard because we could not oppose them and live." These stories had been spread over the earth.

In the great mass of testimony, Rockefeller had stood forth, stark and alone, as the Villain, the overshadowing Octopus.

So it was a careful, watchful John D. who advised his associates in May, 1911: "Dearly

beloved, we must obey the Supreme Court. Our splendid, happy family must scatter."

At 23 Wall Street, a blunt, full-blooded man named Morgan gruffly remarked: "How in hell is any court going to compel a man to compete with himself?"

Morgan did not know, but John D. did, that the various Standard units, even if they wanted to, could not compete successfully with each other. Rockefeller's vast organization functioned so smoothly that each subsidiary dominated its field, strategically. The Standard Oil Company of New York, for instance, was master of New England; Standard of Indiana dictated to the Middle West; California Standard ruled the Pacific coast. Ohio Oil was solely a producer. Prairie Oil and Gas was both producer and transporter. Galena-Signal and Vacuum Oil specialized in lubricants.

Not until the dissolution decree was it officially demonstrated, as suspected, that John D. Rockefeller controlled vastly more money than any other individual on earth. The government's suit established certain basic facts. There were 983,383 shares of a par value of $100 each in the Standard Oil Company of

New Jersey, holding company for all the subsidiaries.

Stock in New Jersey Standard, in 1911, was worth approximately $650. Each share in New Jersey Standard included rights in subsidiary companies. These rights, as we shall soon see, were one hundred per cent nuggets. Through a stock scheme worked out by John D., owners of New Jersey Standard owned the trust.

So, in its inquiry into the real ownership of oil, the government merely had to discover who possessed stock in the New Jersey Standard. The answer was interesting. Eight groups, individuals and estates, owned the majority of the trust. John D., individually, was proprietor of more than one quarter of the total! His holdings were 244,345 shares. Next largest shareholder was the Harkness family with 93,670 shares. Then came the Pratt family, with 58,250 shares; fourth, Oliver H. Payne, with 48,000 shares; fifth, the Flagler family, with 36,770; sixth, the Rogers family, with 20,190; seventh, William Rockefeller, with 8,000 shares; eighth, John D. Archbold, with 6,000 shares.

The comparatively puny holdings of Brother William Rockefeller are accounted for by the

fact that at various times he had sold great blocks of stock to John D. It is no secret that William Rockefeller's courage frequently failed him about oil, and that on such occasions John D. always encouraged William to sell—to John D. Percy A. Rockefeller ("Pa" Rockefeller his friends call him affectionately), William's surviving son, could spin an extremely interesting tale about the transactions between his father and his uncle, if he would. However, William sold to John and invested heavily in mills, mines, railroads, et cetera. William died possessed of a mere three or four hundred millions. John D. reveres his brother's memory but never speaks enthusiastically of the latter's oil wisdom.

In 1911, the book value of John D.'s holdings in the Standard trust was $159,250,000. The same interest today would be worth $857,500,000. The vast increase is due to tremendous multiplication in the consumption of petroleum products. In evaluating John D.'s wealth, one must not overlook the snug $205,000,000 John D. exacted from Morgan for the northwestern ore lands. Rockefeller, also, had a huge interest in the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railway, in Western Maryland, in the

Union Pacific, and in many, many additional enterprises.

At the high tide Rockefeller's wealth probably more closely approximated two than one billion.

It was almost a fetish with John D. to undercapitalize his companies.

His financial secrets were not revealed until the dissolution decree. Then Rockefeller was disclosed as a wise old squirrel who'd hidden his assets in this cache or that. Most of his subsidiaries were returning vast profits, but he had successfully concealed them. Only in the soundless depths of his astounding mind was there a true catalogue of his real wealth.

Take the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, the concern upon which the ambitious, mob-responsive Chicago judge, Landis, had plastered a $29,000,000 fine. This company was capitalized at $1,000,000, par valuation of stock $100. In December, 1911—seven months after the famous dissolution decree—the $100 stock sold at $3,000. The following May (1912) Indiana Standard increased its capitalization to $30,000,000 and declared what came to be a famous stock dividend of 2,900 per cent. Later additional dividends (distributed in stock) increased an original single

share to six hundred shares. As I write, Indiana Standard stock is selling around sixty dollars a share. Thus we may value the 600 shares at $36,000. A profit upon the cost in 1911 of exactly $33,000!

"We did not dream," says John D., "of the later expansion in the uses of our products."

Examples of such enhancement in values could be multiplied indefinitely. But let's return to the Supreme Court's decree.

The spectacular dissolution decree caused a clamor of tongues all over the world. From one place only — 26 Broadway — no sound emerged. "Shut your mouth and run your business," was still the motto of the aging men in that tower of silence, erected by Rockefeller. Each day the men who had been damned by the Supreme Court, John D.'s associates, assembled in the directors room, their holy of holies, consulted with Rockefeller by wire and wrestled with the great problem.

They were an interesting group, these men into whose hands Rockefeller had entrusted management, men who had been his lieutenants in the seventies and the eighties. Rotund, round-faced John D. Archbold, now sixty-five,

the slickest underground political manipulator in America; E. T. Bedford, ruddy, side-whiskered; Charles M. Pratt, lanky, lean; James A. Moffett, bulky, square-headed, stubborn; Secretary Henry C. Folger, Jr., a delicate, thin-bearded man of fifty-five whose passion was collecting Shakspeariana.

How did John D. and his pals purpose to meet this latest, and most formidable attack? Rumor ran riot in the newspapers. Wall Street speculated but could learn nothing. Rockefeller and his aged associates continued to conduct their business in silence, exactly like a private bank in a country town. Of all the great corporations of the country, here was one that had never made a report even to the 6,078 stockholders who (theoretically) owned it. Standard Oil was a mystery to the N'th degree!

On the last day of July (1911) newspaper men were invited into the soft-carpeted office of J. I. C. Clarke, the Standard's press agent. Clarke, a stately and genial old playwright, was employed at a princely salary to keep unfavorable news about the Oil Trust out of the papers. He handed to each reporter a single sheet of typewritten "flimsy"—the first statement of the Standard Oil.

The management had decided, the statement read, that the decision of the Supreme Court demanded that the Standard Oil be divided into thirty-four separate companies—the main New Jersey Company and thirty-three others. Stockholders of record on the New Jersey Standard's books as of September 1, 1911, would each be given their fractions of shares in the subsidiaries. Distribution would be made on or about December 1. That was all.

Small stockholders were in a daze. "What fractions shall we receive?" they asked. "How will the stock of the subsidiaries be divided?"

New Jersey Standard, the sole holding company, had a curious issue of stock: the 983,383 shares carried a total book value of $98,338,300. It was felt certain the stock would be increased to some even figure, if for no other reason than to secure an evenly divisible fraction. Perhaps it would be raised a little to make an even million shares or it might be made five million shares at $100 a unit because five million hundred-dollar shares would much more closely represent the real value of the property than one million shares.

But these suggestions were sternly suppressed by the principal owner, John Rocke-

feller. There must be no inflation of *his* company. More recent trusts had pumped hundreds of millions of wind and water into their stocks and exchanged it for the public's money. But John D. had created Standard Oil out of his first fateful earnings. He still looked upon it, not as the public's money or property but as *his* money and *his* property.

The world waited, but no additional word came from the silent men at 26 Broadway. From time to time, deferential Negro attendants admitted newspaper men into the quiet rooms of the Standard executives. But, always, there was "nothing to say." And there was "nothing to say" until November 15, the last day of legal grace. Then the Jersey Standard stockholders were notified that on December 1, 1911, they would be given their fractions.

December 1 came the deluge. Each stockholder received his tiny nine hundred and eighty-three thousand, three hundred and eighty-thirds. By registered mail came an assorted package of strange paper mysteries, previously confined in one share of that unknown aggregation called the Standard Oil:

One $\frac{994}{983,383}$ of Swan and Finch Com-

pany; face value 10 cents.

One $\frac{7143}{983,383}$ of Washington Oil Company; face value 7 cents.

One $\frac{1995}{983,383}$ of Borne-Scrymser Company; face value 20 cents.

One $\frac{2493}{983,383}$ of Colonial Oil Company; face value 25 cents.

And so on through all the nine hundred and eighty-three thousand, three hundred and eighty-thirds up to the $\frac{249,995}{983,383}$ of the Standard Oil of California with a face value of twenty-five dollars and forty-two cents.

No wonder the small stockholder was stunned. Yesterday he had one share of stock in the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, a tangible thing worth almost $700. Today he had thirty-four mathematical mysteries—a funny assortment of shin-plasters. What in the name of Bedlam was two dimes' worth of Borne-Scrymser?

Nobody could, or would, tell him and he waited until dividend time came around. Then the mathematical heights of idiocy were reached! For instance: the Chesebrough

Manufacturing Company distributed a dividend of ten per cent, and each owner of one share of New Jersey Standard was given his portion—.82 cents. Chesebrough, necessarily had to send out one-cent checks. A net loss of .18 of a cent and a distraction in bookkeeping!

Galena Signal Oil Company, distributing its dividends, mailed 1,200 separate checks of less than ten cents each, half of them for three cents.

The small stockholder hung his dividend checks on the wall as souvenirs and sought to sell his holdings. Buyers were scarce—mostly Stock Exchange firms specializing in Standard Oil "splinters" (as they were called) and piecing them together into entire shares of stock.

This was the situation on December 26, 1911. On that day there was great activity at 26 Broadway. The offices of various companies shifted around. Some companies crossed the continent; others merely crossed the corridor. "Splinters" were selling as low as $1,400 a share.

Then, one after another, John D.'s companies multiplied their stock. Suddenly Wall Street realized that for a generation Rocke-

feller and his mates had concealed enormous assets. New Jersey Standard stock shot up to $4,000 on the informal curb market. Rockefeller had never permitted his stocks to be listed upon the New York Stock Exchange.

On the curb, an orgy of speculation broke out. After its thirty-for-one stock dividend, Standard of Indiana mounted to $7,000 a share. Each single Standard fragment became a field for the blindest gambling. To this day, old speculators wag their heads and tell stories of the Standard bull market.

A keen-eared waiter in a Broad street restaurant bought several shares of Prairie Oil and Gas. Curiously enough, he received, his brokers said, the identical certificate that had been sold by Baron Rothschild. In a few days the alert garcon cleaned up several thousand dollars.

Within three months of the Supreme Court's decree, some $200,000,000 had been added to the value of Standard Oil stocks. No other stock had ever appreciated so greatly in so short a time. Hidden millions were being released. Automatically, one quarter of the profits went to John Rockefeller.

That frenzied era, though, signalled the passing of John D. as the sole Emperor of Oil.

An awakened and profit-hungry public began to buy into Standard Oil. John D.'s trust, held originally by 6,000 stockholders, is now owned by more than 300,000 stockholders.

The government's suit did not, of course, dissolve Standard Oil. John D.'s trust could not be dissolved, commercially. It could not be permitted to scatter for the simple reason that Rockefeller and the other controlling owners were not fools. They understood perfectly well that the dissolution contemplated by the Supreme Court would result (for them) in commercial suicide. Imagine owners of a Standard Oil refinery permitting a pipe line to pass into the hands of rivals!

Such a thing was impossible and so it has proved. Since dissolution, Rockefeller and his associates have done not one single thing that for a moment would depress the value of their properties.

Disreputable as have been its practices, the idea behind Standard Oil is preeminently sound. One by one, the trust's aged heads have died (with the sole exception of John D.). Their heirs and salaried executives reared in the trade have pressed into their places. These form a new social organism,

created by the development of our great corporations. Standard Oil, and other huge coalitions are still controlled, as most folks realize, by an "inside" group. The Oil Trust has changed in personnel. Men have come in and gone out. But the thing itself is immortal, a necessity of the business system.

John D.'s great business structure is still intact. To all practical purposes, it still operates as a unit and controls (roughly) fifty per cent of the oil industry. Some 16,000 companies and individuals divide the remainder. The grand capitalization of the "Standard group" is now some $2,500,000,000, more than twenty times the capital of the old Jersey Company. New Jersey Standard, incidentally, with estimated net assets of $1,000,000,000 and no fewer than forty-six sub-companies all over the earth, is the largest single unit in the oil business anywhere in the world.

When necessary, the Standard group functions as a unit. John D. has transferred most of his personal holdings to his son or to his various benefactions. Registered in John D. Rockefeller Jr's., name are 2,268,000 shares of common and 39,130 shares of preferred stock in the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. This represents 11.4 per cent of the total.

A tiny proportion. Yet, when desired, the Rockefeller holdings are marshaled and voted together. In the early months of 1929 the Rockefellers waged a "moral war" against Col. Robert W. Stewart and experienced little difficulty in assembling sufficient stock in Standard of Indiana to oust Col. Stewart from the chairmanship of the board.

Theoretically, companies of the old combination are in active competition. Actually, each company occupies a distinct and more or less arbitrarily bounded selling territory. Commercial expediency dictates this alignment. On the other hand, Standard companies that have entered the field of production are keenly competing in most of the big petroleum areas. Competitive bidding by the Carter Oil Company, subsidiary of the New Jersey Standard, and the Prairie Oil and Gas Company, one of the old group, hugely boosted the price of the Osage Indian leases in the Burbank field of Oklahoma; and often public bids upon asphalt and road contracts look like lists of the old subsidiaries.

If he had not been forced to unscramble his golden omelette, would John D. have been able to maintain his strange hold on American oil? The trade does not think so. It does not be-

lieve even his genius could have attracted the necessary capital to dominate new fields opened in various parts of the country. In 1911, less than three billions of dollars were invested in oil. Today the legitimate oil investment is more than ten billions.

During the greater portion of his acquisitive years, Rockefeller blandly flouted public opinion. He took it as a matter of course that he would make enemies, that his religious and philanthropic leanings should be held up as hypocritical and made the grounds of much of the hostility against him. He had become quite accustomed to a defensive role. He knew that a stone wall of distrust encircled him; that the public imagination, working upon his secluded life and unsavory revelations of his business methods, had invested him in an atmosphere of mystery and plot hatching. Particularly was this true after the dissolution suit disclosed the enormous extent of his wealth.

Now he determined to reduce the sentiment against him to milder proportions. He never expected to become popular with the people. But he did desire to avoid actual molestation and to travel about freely. So he determined to convince the public that he was really

human. Accordingly, he posed for photographs, gave more frequent platitudinous talks at church or Sunday school, even received a congress of newspaper humorists in his Cleveland home.

But the public remained cold. Hostile eyes met him everywhere. There was no abatement of bitterness against him in circles that could not be denounced as radical. Criticism drenched, all but inundated him. He looked ahead and saw not only his own life but the lives of his children clouded.

"After my death justice will be done," he told an associate in a burst of confidence, during this dark period, "but I don't want to leave my dear children a heritage of hatred."

Grappling with this, the most serious problem of his life, John D.'s keen, cool mind worked out a solution. Benevolence. He would return to his fellows the wealth he had wrested from them and do it in such a way that even the harshest of critics would be convinced that he had the welfare of humanity in mind. Did he really have this welfare in mind? No one will ever know. It is interesting, though, at this stage to recall that more than three-fourths of his estimated gifts of $750,000,000 to charity have been distributed since

1911, the year the public became mathematically cognizant of his vast wealth.

John D.'s lordly benevolences have been bestowed under the same system and with the same wasteless shrewdness employed in his business. Rockefeller charity is controlled and regulated, organized just as the donor organized companies to develop new lines of business. In the public mind, John D. appears as the organizer of the Benevolent Trust—cold, unemotional distribution of charitable funds along fundamental lines. "If a combination to do business is effective in saving waste and in getting better results," asks John D., "why is not combination far more effective in philanthropic work?"

Rockefeller was *not* the originator of the Benevolent Trust. He adapted the idea from, and privately gives full credit to, a man whom he designates (also in private) as the most valuable individual with whom he was ever associated.

This man was Frederick Taylor Gates.

When John D. and "F. T." first met, Gates was a young Baptist clergyman and denominational executive from the Middle West. For a generation, Gates was Rockefeller's chief almoner. His story is fascinating:

Gates was born in Maine, Broome County, N. Y., son of a Baptist minister. He himself entered the ministry (Baptist, of course) after graduating from Rochester Theological Seminary in 1880. He worked his way through school and the University of Rochester as clerk in a store and bank. He passed eight years as pastor of the Central Church in Minneapolis; and then embarked upon a project that later was to lead him into one of the most extraordinary partnerships that ever existed between two men.

At the suggestion of George A. Pillsbury, head of the family of millers, Gates abandoned his pulpit in 1888 and led a campaign in Minnesota to raise a $50,000 endowment for Pillsbury Academy at Owatonna, Minn. The ease with which he witched money from hard-boiled business men led to his selection as secretary and executive officer of the newly formed American Baptist Education Society. A few months later Gates was planning to establish a great Baptist university in the Middle West.

John D. Rockefeller was on the Baptist "sucker" list. I write perhaps a bit irreverently as the grandson of the Rev. Dr. Edwin T. Winkler, a rather noted Baptist divine of the Gates-Rockefeller era. But what I am striving

to convey, inexpertly, is that Rockefeller had for years been a haphazard donator to Baptist charities.

So, early on a May morning of 1889, by appointment, the Rev. Gates rang the bell at John D.'s old-fashioned, ugly mansion at No. 4 West Fifty-fourth street, New York City. After a frugal breakfast, the host and his visitor walked up and down on the sidewalk outside.

The proposition discussed was what proportion of the needed sum of $1,000,000 for the projected University of Chicago would be contributed by Mr. Rockefeller. The amount offered was $400,000; the amount requested, politely but insistently, was $600,000. Finally, Rockefeller yielded. The oil man's capitulation brought Gates "a thrill I shall never forget," he said in after years—a satisfaction never equalled by subsequent Rockefeller donations of ten, thirty, and a hundred million dollars.

This primary encounter led not only to the creation of the University of Chicago, to which Rockefeller has given some $50,000,000; but to a close personal relationship between Gates and John D. The former largely conceived, planned, and organized the enormous philan-

thropic enterprises that have illumined the name of Rockefeller throughout the world.

In the autumn of 1901, inspired by an article of Dr. Osler, Gates conceived the first of the large benevolent institutions that are the product of his and Rockefeller's efforts, the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. At his death, in February, 1929, Gates was chairman of the Institute's board of trustees.

Again, it was Gates who organized the General Education Board and obtained Rockefeller's support. He was its chairman for a decade. Gates was chief architect of the gigantic $200,000,000 Rockefeller Foundation, creator of subsidiary philanthropies that range the earth.

Gates was a business genius, as well as philanthropist. He taught John D. the art of fundamental, scientific giving. It could not be expected that Rockefeller would overlook a God-given opportunity to employ Gates as a business adviser as well as almoner. He didn't!

As far back as 1893, John D. enlisted the services of Gates in his (Rockefeller's) business affairs. The name of Gates once appeared as president of thirteen corporations (outside the oil business) controlled by Rockefeller.

"Fred Gates was a wonderful business

man," says John D. with satisfaction. "His work for the American Baptist Education Society required him to travel extensively. Once, as he was going south, I asked him to look into an iron mill in which I had an interest. His report was a model of clarity!

"Then I asked him to make some investigations of other property in the west. I had been told this particular company was rolling in wealth. Mr. Gates' report showed I had been deceived.

"Now, I realized I had met a commercial genius. I persuaded Mr. Gates to become a man of business. He consented—if I would help him indulge his passion for accomplishing something for the good of mankind. Of course, I assented. That was the beginning of our association.

"Mr. Gates always enjoyed work. His splendid co-operation gave me more time to plant trees and play golf. Together we worked out schemes of philanthropy. We searched constantly for finalities. We tried to get at the causes of things, to cure evils at the source. That is why we were so intensely interested in the University of Chicago: it gave so much attention to research."

Gates and Rockefeller selected as first presi-

dent of the University of Chicago Doctor William R. Harper. Dr. Harper was able and a man of exquisite charm. John D. had met him first at Vassar College. His favorite daughter, Bessie Rockefeller (later the wife of Professor Strong) was a student at Vassar. Harper was then at Yale but frequently came to Vassar to lecture. With his unerring instinct, John D. picked the young professor as a "comer." Hence, many years later, he swam into the public eye as pioneer president of the "Rockefeller University." Harper was a simple, modest gentleman, now dead.

"Probably the world will never realize," philosophizes John D., "how largely the present splendid university system of the Central Western States is due indirectly to the genius of this man."

The Harpers were often house guests of the Rockefellers. Sometimes Harper's visits would be followed by huge Rockefeller gifts to the University of Chicago.

Chuckling, John D. recalls William Harper's acute distress at some of the newspaper cartoons of the period. John D. relates:

"The cartoonists would picture me as fleeing across rivers on cakes of floating ice with Dr. Harper in hot pursuit. Or, perhaps, he would

be following close upon my trail, like the wolf in the Russian story, in inaccessible country retreats, while I escaped only by means of the slight delays I occasioned him by dropping, now and then, a million dollar bill which he would be obliged to stop and pick up. Some of the cartoons had a flavor of humor but they were never humorous to Dr. Harper."

Harper knew, of course, that Rockefeller's expanding benevolences were conducted, as Standard Oil had been, with mathematical precision. Every requirement must be placed in writing.

The Benevolent Trust was managed just as the Malevolent Trust had been.

John D.'s primal principles could be changed only by death.

And this monumental man had provided even for death! He had a son. And that son had been trained from the cradle to translate into actuality his principles and his precepts!

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (almost neglected thus far in our narrative) grew and developed under the stern tutelage of his father.

John D., Junior, is a direct evolution of John D., Senior.

Junior is Senior's greatest triumph!

Let us yield to the demand of duty and deal next with him.

VIII

JOHN D., JR., A CHARACTER SKETCH

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR., is the only possible evolution of the senior Rockefeller. Indeed, he is almost a replica of his spectrelike, sepulchral progenitor.

The junior Rockefeller is as steady and as unemotional as a clock. He firmly believes that he was brought into the world to perpetuate the mental, moral and spiritual qualities of his father, and he is doing his level best to fulfill his destiny. Twice daily he sinks to his knees and beseeches the Heavenly Father to bless his earthly father. Without conscious irreverance, he draws little distinction in deification.

John D., Sr., likewise objectifies himself in the other. "I count it as God's greatest blessing," he tells friends, "that He has given me such a son, a son who believes in the worthwhile things of life." The lives of the Rockefellers, father and son, join together and spin out like a smooth ribbon. They share a deep and unshakeable belief in work, Godliness and

their own brand of righteousness. The latter includes, of course, the righteousness of making money.

In many respects, John D., Jr.'s, story is as remarkable as that of his father. He came upon the scene at a time when his father, Carnegie and other ethically oblique apostles of high finance had piled up wealth to such an extent that alarmists saw in the situation a menace to the state. John D. was the Overshadowing Octopus. While the muckrakers howled uncomfortably close at his heels, the Octopus withdrew into friendly shadows. Some of his burdens fell upon his son, and he was well able to bear them.

Set down at first as a mere puppet upon his father's knee, the junior Rockefeller developed rapidly. He became the Little Boy Blue of Capitalism, the first Modern Money Magnate with Vision and Soul. Without dissipating by one jot the family's fortune or power, he induced the American people to stop attacking his father, and turned the attention of the critics to the great Rockefeller benefactions and to his efforts to bring about industrial rapprochement. Now the sage old Octopus, growing younger by the year, smiles as he ladles out dimes and platitudes; and is permitted free

pose as a pollyanna with messages of cheer and a heart full of love for his fellows. Octopus, Jr., meanwhile has become a world famous philanthropist and reformer.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., is about as striking an example of pure utilitarianism as the world has yet produced. Also, he has succeeded his father as, probably, the only individual billionaire on earth. If you doubt it, take out your pencil and multiply the market value of the ten million-odd shares that rest in his name in the various Standard Oil Companies and other properties, or read the government reports which show that his annual income tax exceeds by some millions the combined total of Henry and Edsel Ford.

But, over and beyond that, what is he—this smooth, bland little man of fifty-five who could buy a few big railway systems and still have enough left over to take the chorus of the reigning musical comedy out to supper? Well, he is virtuous, brainy, courageous, precise and coldly scientific by inclination, training and practice. He believes in life as he lives it, and that others should live it his way. Like all zealous reformers, if he had the power he'd use it—he would see to it that others *did* live life his way.

Boiled down to a formula: he is *efficiency.* He has a peculiar passion for petty economy. In his tall, modern town house adjoining his father's on West Fifty-fourth street, there is a standing rule that lights must be dimmed when not in use. Often he spends an hour prowling through the mansion's many rooms to see that his orders are obeyed. Warnings and financial penalties follow infractions, whether the guilty person is a servant or a member of the family. From morning until night the daily routine in the Rockefeller household is one of studied economy bordering upon asceticism.

For years the most expensive car in the family's possession was a Dodge. There were two of these in the stables and garage in Fifty-fifth street west of Sixth avenue. The little machines looked strangely out of place beside the senior Rockefeller's imposing Simplexes and Lincolns. The son's prejudice against motors lasted longer than his father's. Even while the growth of the automotive industry was pouring untold additional millions into the Rockefeller coffers, the junior Rockefeller frequently ejected curious motorists from his father's Pocantico dukedom. Until four or five years ago he sent his younger boys to school in an old-fashioned horse-drawn carriage.

Sometimes the youngsters would crouch down beneath the level of the seat, seeking to avoid the jeers of ribald street urchins.

Not so long ago, Rockefeller, Jr., saw some skylarking boys playing tennis at Tarrytown. They were sportively knocking old balls high in the air and losing many. Rockefeller remarked with a great deal of positiveness: "Those are not the sort of boys I'd want in my office. They would be equally wasteful with pads and pencils."

For years Rockefeller, Jr., never tipped. Now he applies the ten per cent rule, rigidly. He gave his first tip twenty years ago in the barber shop at 26 Broadway. He was sailing for England, was in a hurry and in grievous need of a haircut. The barber, John Phelan, did the job unusually quickly. "Good work," said the famous customer curtly, dropped a gratuity into Phelan's palm, and hurried away. The other barbers crowded around, excitedly. Phelan opened his hand and displayed a bright nickel! Phelan had the coin framed and hung it in the parlor under an inscription: "John D., Jr.'s Best Tip."

Like his father, the young Rockefeller is a man of fixed habits, fixed methods. Although of conventional and orthodox intellectual cast,

he possesses a penetrant mind with no detours. Most business days find him in an oak-panelled suite on a floor high up in the Standard Oil Building. The office is rented by his father and himself from the Standard Oil Company of New York. Both Rockefellers insistently feed the fiction that they have completely severed active connection with the Oil Trust.

In this lofty workroom, with windows that sweep harbor and rivers, the junior Rockefeller supervises not only the family investments but the practical administration of the enormous benevolent trusts into which his father and himself have poured three-fourths of a billion. To him come reports of scientists and educators, Rockefeller-financed, battling disease and ignorance in even the most primitive places of the globe. Incredible tales of romance, tragedy, triumph pour in from the outposts of civilization. If they stir the bland little man's blood, he gives no sign. Rockefeller, Jr., is a scientific Santa Claus.

Let's have a look at him as he sits at his desk. He is below medium height, neither slender nor stout. His nose commands the rest of his round, smooth-shaven face. It is slightly aquiline. The eyes are clear and blue. The chin is square and has solidity. The hair, light

brown, thinning and graying, is parted midway between the right-hand side and the middle of his ample cerebral frontage. He invariably wears a high, stiff collar.

In his office Rockefeller receives by appointment representatives of institutions and family companies and a few other individuals weeded out by secretaries from an enormous mail. "Writing to Rockefeller" is a favorite diversion of thousands. Rockefeller does not personally see, nor even hear of one per cent of the letters addressed to him. Most of the missives contain requests for donations, ranging from pleas for personal loans to endowments of millions. Requests for loans flutter into wastebaskets. The Rockefeller benefactions are conducted on wholesale scale only. "It is just as easy to give away one hundred thousand dollars as one dollar," says John D., Jr. Incidentally, one of his pet dislikes is the word charity.

The most rigid examination is given to requests from institutions, particularly those aimed to reach what the Rockefellers consider fundamental human needs—health and education. Trained investigators are sent to survey the field. Applicants often are put through a test as rigorous as a third degree in a Turkish bath. Every possible phase of the proposed

project is gone into. Lengthy forms are filled out. Costs are discussed down to the last penny. Finally, should the institution be found worthy of help, complete reports are placed before Rockefeller. All the final decisions are his.

His father no longer places a check upon him. There were years when the son was virtually in the hands of shrewd almoners the Oil King had picked to dispense part of his wealth. Chief of these was Frederick Taylor Gates, the remarkable preacher-business man upon whom we dwelt in the preceding chapter; Starr Jocelyn Murphy, a New York lawyer; and (more recently) Dr. George E. Vincent, president of the Rockefeller Foundation. Now Rockefeller, Jr., is the final arbiter. He selects his aids with all the old astuteness of his father.

The junior Rockefeller is the one active capitalist in the world whose chief mission in life is giving away money. In this chosen function he is as exact as a chemist in his laboratory. Like his father he has the Napoleonic ability to use, with coldly practical exactness, the constructive brains of those whom he selects to serve him.

Rockefeller's routine of life is rigidly regulated. He works steadily and regularly. He

rises winter and summer before seven. He goes to bed early unless exception is made for an occasional night at concert or opera. Even when travelling, his workday is eight hours in duration, no more, no less. To him waste of time is waste of opportunity. His chief social event of the year is the annual dinner of the Bible class of which he has long been honorary president. At the end of his day, when in New York, he often walks on Fifth Avenue or in Central Park, before going home to dinner.

No out-of-season luxuries are ever served at his table, and grace is asked before each meal. Post-prandial entertainment may consist of a violin solo by Rockefeller or a selection on the piano by Mrs. Rockefeller. When his wife plays, Rockefeller turns the music. He is a capable, by no means brilliant, musician. In his fiddling there is an element of sobriety, precision. Sometimes there is singing of an evening and in the impromptu program hymns are always included.

John D., Jr.'s, character is the logical outcome of his inheritance. His mother's people, as we have pointed out, were pioneer abolitionists and pioneer prohibitionists. Today, Rockefeller, Jr., and his family liberally support the

work of Hampton and Tuskegee. Each young Rockefeller child is "god-father" to a Negro student. Each pays the way to education of the colored protege and personally corresponds with him.

In boyhood, John D., Jr.'s, mother taught him the evils of alcohol. The Rockefellers were the heaviest contributors to the dry campaign that resulted in the Eighteenth Amendment. Rockefeller, Jr., today comes closest to a show of emotion when he discusses the horrors of liquor. He opposes even the workingman's supposedly essential glass of beer. "One glass of beer may lead to another," he declares. "Therefore, I say one glass is one glass too many."

Ice water flows freely at the Rockefeller table. At his marriage in 1901 to Abby Green Aldrich, daughter of the old Republican standpatter, United States Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, of Rhode Island, wine was omitted from the breakfast menu, at the insistent demand of the bridegroom. Certain well-burgundied old gentlemen guests were offended, but the bridegroom's conscience remained unruffled throughout the wineless wedding.

John D., Jr., early developed qualities that delighted his parents. He was the model boy

one reads about in story books. He never got his clothing soiled nor mud on his boots, had no bloody encounters with other lads. He read Sunday school tracts, Bible lessons and such standard fiction as his mother considered proper among the works of Hugo, Dickens, Bulwer-Lytton, Scott, Washington Irving, Thackeray. He read almost no poetry and has since sought unsuccessfully to acquire a taste for this branch of literature. He early learned the value of thrift, and earned the first money of his own before he was ten. His father offered him a penny for each fence-post he could find on the estate in Cleveland that needed mending. Junior scurried about and found thirteen. John D. verified the count and paid out the pennies. "My son came to me and asked how he could double the money," chuckles Rockefeller, Sr. "I told him he could go to work mending the fences. He did and earned the prevailing laborer's wage, fifteen cents an hour."

His mother used to give him five cents an hour for practicing on the violin. By the time he was fourteen he had as many dollars of his own, which his father put out at interest for him. A little later the lad became a capitalist by buying a share of stock in the Standard Oil

Company of Ohio. The purchase required more than his savings. His father let him have the necessary amount and charged him only six per cent interest. Cheerily, John D. reminded Junior of the latter's luck in not having to pay the ten per cent Senior's father (slick Bill Rockefeller) always exacted.

The youth of nineteen, who entered Brown University in the fall of 1893, was thoroughly schooled in the Rockefeller code. His parents feared not for his virtue nor his ability to take care of himself in the great eastern centre of Baptist education. At Brown, Junior's allowance was one hundred dollars a month. He managed to live and clothe himself on half that. His classmates remember him as a pallid, earnest youth who did not smoke, drink, chew nor gamble, wore shiny suits, was faithful in his studies (particularly the cultivation of Orthodox Baptist Theology), and who sought to reform wilder students. He was a good skater but poor at football. His third year he made Phi Beta Kappa. At frat meetings he was in the habit of drawing fellow members aside and expostulating with them upon their mode of life. "Old man, I am only suggesting," young Rockefeller would offer, timidly, "but don't you think you are smoking too

much? Tobacco, you know, affects the heart. Better cut it out."

At college he was, of course, regular in his attendance at chapel. He graduated in 1897, neither at the head nor at the foot of his class. As he looks back upon it, the chief event of his four years at Brown was his meeting with Abby Aldrich. The Senator's daughter was a year younger and very like him in point of view. Though she had seen much of society in New York and Washington, she was serious-minded and cared little for frivolity. She and Junior often went buggy riding Sunday afternoons. They wrote chaste letters to each other after his graduation.

There was, of course, inevitably but one career for the only son of John D. Rockefeller. The young man reported for work in the fall of 1897 at 26 Broadway. For a year or more he was shifted about various departments. He caught on rapidly, displaying considerable financial skill. Gradually, as he demonstrated his ability to understand and appreciate the intricacies of modern financial methods, he was put on one board of directors after another. His first directorship was in the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad; he was scrupulous in attendance at all directors' meet-

ings and never overlooked the customary fee. The young man was quick and apt. He studied railroad manuals. Soon he could tell just what was meant by increased cost per ton mile.

There was little curiosity about him at first. He seldom broke into print. The name "Rockefeller" still meant to the public only the cold-eyed creator of Standard Oil, an unfathomable individual about whom myths and legends were arising. When John D. had let it be known in Wall Street that he was retiring from active business, everyone grinned. Nevertheless, the man who could control a billion of capital took his dyspeptic stomach into the country.

Then, suddenly, in the fall of 1899, the Street realized that there was a new light in Standard Oil. His name was John D. Rockefeller, Jr. He had just daringly consummated his first independent financial coup. Three months before, "Leather," as the common stock of the United States Leather Company, was called, had been selling at six and nobody was trading in it. Soon it went to ten and the Street began to scent a big speculative deal. Steadily it rose until, the first week in November, it was up around forty. The rise of approximately five hundred per cent was traced to young

Rockefeller because of a semi-official announcement that two hundred thousand shares of leather common had been transferred on the books of the company to the son of the richest man in the world. The young man, it was generally believed, cleared considerable money in this deal.

Then the financial sharpshooters began to ask questions. What manner of man was this young Prince of Oil? Another Jay Gould? A Joe Leiter? The junior Rockefeller's name began to find its way into the financial columns. John D., Sr., was quietly amused. He was one of the few who knew that Junior was just cutting his eye-teeth and had merely launched his flyer in Leather to show his father that he had absorbed a little something about finance.

Public curiosity was aroused. It was to be piqued to a still greater extent when the son took over direction of the men's Bible class of the family church, the Fifth Avenue Baptist, and voluntarily stepped out into the limelight —as a believer in Work, Duty and Godliness.

Junior succeeded the scholarly Charles Evans Hughes as leader of the Bible class. The event created a sensation. Curiosity seekers dropped in to have a look at the Richest Young Man in the World teaching Sunday

school, just as they went to St. George's to see Dr. Rainsford's richest parishioner, J. Pierpont Morgan, pass the plate.

Membership in the class trebled almost overnight. Men on the fringes of the stock market figured that here was an easy opportunity to get in right with the biggest gang in the Street. They were soon disillusioned. The pale, low-voiced young man on the rostrum seemed to divine instinctively whether a man came to his class for spiritual comfort or selfish purposes. He soon made it evident that he was conducting a class for the study of the Scriptures, not an institution for the dissemination of Wall Street tips or an employment bureau for the Standard Oil Company.

One day a devout follower who enjoyed the distinction of calling the announcements approached Rockefeller for a job. "I am getting only eight dollars a week where I am now," he explained, "and I'd like to better myself." Rockefeller looked grieved. "It would ruin your life if I were to help you," he said firmly. "Self-help is the only thing in the world. You must not try to lean on others."

Rockefeller soon weeded out the fakers and the class prospered. The earnest young leader, cutaway clad, expounded the primary virtues

Sunday after Sunday and there was never a titter. "Many misguided persons," he'd say solemnly, "think the true test of friendship is whether the friend will lend money. Don't you believe it. If you have any friendship for people, don't you spoil it by trying to borrow money from them."

One Sunday the young millionaire delivered himself of an agitated plea that the brethren contribute more liberally to the weekly collection. The eyes of the two central-office men sent to guard him twinkled when he said: "Men, we need fifteen dollars each Sabbath to meet the expenses of the class. I have thought out a plan—let seventy-five men give five cents, fifty contribute ten cents, and twenty-five give us fifteen cents each Sunday. That's twelve-fifty. I am sure we can raise the additional two-fifty."

In dealing with difficult problems of morality and exegesis, young Rockefeller accustomed himself to treading a neat circle. He explained that the Saviour did not mean, literally, that it would be easier for a camel to crawl through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God "because conditions now are different." Similarly, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth" did not

necessarily refer to money. "A man may possess great wealth on earth," explained the oil prince, "and at the same time build up treasures in heaven. Wealth is not necessarily an impediment to a man's admittance to the Beyond. . . . The growth of a large business is merely the survival of the fittest. It does the greatest good to the greatest number, although perhaps at the expense of the few. The American Beauty rose can be produced only by sacrificing the early buds which grow up around it. So the growth of big business is merely the working out of a law of God and of nature."

John D., Sr., happened to hear this epochal preachment. He listened to his twenty-five-year-old progeny with relish and expressed his satisfaction thus: "I would rather see my son doing this work than see him a monarch on his throne." John D. often dropped in on the Bible class and his clutching eyes would soften as he drank in Junior's weekly orations, whatever impression the little homilies made on other listeners.

The friendly Rockefeller talks were very much like those still addressed to childish minds in Sunday schools of the old order which contain nothing more dangerous than careless

and often inaccurate platitudes from which most children easily and quickly recover. Junior stuck to the religion of the nursery for ten years. Then he, too, recovered. Experience in life, in business, in human contacts brought about a gradual shift in point of view. Rockefellers are intelligent utilitarians.

Along about 1910, the junior Rockefeller's keen business instinct told him that Protestantism, to survive, must drop many of its outworn inter-denominational distinctions. So he read the "new" theology prodigiously and subjected himself to the successive liberalizing influences of President William H. P. Faunce, of Brown University, the late Dr. Cornelius Woelfkin, and the Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick, most militant of the modernists. He emerged a most ardent religious progressive and advocate of the Inter-Church Movement. Further he converted his father, long a disciple of tradition. The two were largely instrumental in bringing Dr. Fosdick to the Park Avenue (formerly the Fifth Avenue) Baptist Church. According to plans of the Rockefellers and Dr. Fosdick, the church's new and magnificent structure on Riverside Drive will be a "church of the world."

Needless to narrate, Rockefeller Jr.'s chang-

ing viewpoint does not meet the approval of fundamentalists of the order of John Roach Straton and J. Frank Norris. These honorable reverends cannot be calm when they speak of John D., Jr. Their fear is not lessened by realization that the junior Rockefeller is likely to prove as efficient in religious reform as he has in social and industrial innovation. So they unleash their thunder upon him: he is misguidedly seeking to standardize education through German rationalization. He is diabolically attempting to standardize religion through elimination of the supernatural and repudiation of the "fundamentals of the faith."

In his point of view upon industrial relations, also, John D., Jr., has demonstrated ability to shift flexibly with the times. John D. believed in governing from the top and built his wealth upon an idea of industrial autocracy. John D., Jr., is, or professes to be, an industrial democrat. He is strong for so-called "republics of labor"—which profess to provide unselfish and equal representation of capital, management and labor upon company arbitration boards, etc. Within certain limits, he even gives verbal support to labor unionism. "Human rights above dividends!" has been his cry since 1915.

He sounds this slogan often, though one notes no appreciable diminution of Rockefeller dividends. The year 1915 was crucial in the development of the younger Rockefeller. The period marked his coming of age in the eyes of his father. The story is interesting:

In 1913 and 1914, it will be recalled, there were violent labor disturbances and much bloodshed in Colorado on the property of the Rockefeller-controlled Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. Miners were shot down by hired guards at Trinidad and elsewhere. Civil war reigned. Sympathetic liberal mass meetings were held all over the country. Bitterness again flamed against the "black" Rockefellers and their "red" millions. In May, 1914, radicals with mourning bands on their arms picketed 26 Broadway and the town houses of the Rockefellers. One excitable young woman with a loaded revolver was ejected from the junior Rockefeller's office. Picturesque old Mother Jones became the Joan of Arc of the coal fields. She stumped the country denouncing the Rockefellers as murderers and plush-lined burglars.

Early in 1915, President Wilson's Industrial Relations Commission took up the case. Frank P. Walsh was chairman of the commission. In

those days Walsh fairly exuded brimstone in the presence of a Captain of Industry. The leonine Walsh summoned John D., Jr., to the witness stand and roared at him for three days. Pale and tense, but cool, the young oil prince parried the onslaught by frankly admitting ignorance of conditions in Colorado. "But, Mr. Chairman," he said soothingly, "at the first opportunity I shall go to Colorado and investigate for myself. If things need changing I will change them."

The afternoon of his last appearance on the stand, Mother Jones marched into Rockefeller's office and offered her hand. "Young man, I believe you mean to be fair," she told him. "I, for one, am willing to give you a chance."

Half an hour later, John D., Jr., shook hands for the first time with newspaper reporters in his own office. Timidly he talked of his affairs and the great problems they had brought to him. He might have been a freshman asking advice of a group of seniors, so emollient was his manner. Little spots of scarlet showed in his pale cheeks as he said: "Gentlemen, I know it is my duty as a director to know more about actual conditions in the mines. I told Mother Jones that, of course, there should be free

speech, free assemblage, and independent, not company-owned, schools, stores and churches in the mine field. I am going to Colorado as soon as I can to learn for myself."

The touching little tableaux was staged by a stolid, ruddy, unobtrusive young man who stood in a corner of the room. This was Ivy Ledbetter Lee who, from the date when he became the first and only Rockefeller press agent —in the true meaning of the term—was to loom larger and larger in the affairs of Standard Oil and Rockefeller, Jr. Lee was the son of a Georgia minister. Some years before he had come to New York from Princeton, with a five dollar bill and an umbrella, and worked on Mr. Hearst's *Journal* until he conceived the idea (with certain reservations, of course) corporations should take the public into their confidence. He has ridden to riches on the theory, and now heads an imposing "public relations" corporation of his own. During the Colorado troubles, Standard Oil borrowed Lee from the Pennsylvania Railroad. He has remained ever since and has become a permanent and invaluable part of the Rockefeller system. It was he who first suggested a personal tour of investigation by Rockefeller, Jr. His influence with the Rockefellers has grown immeasurably. He

and John D., Jr., call each other by their given name, a rarity with Rockefellers.

Until the Colorado mix-up, John D. had not taken his son very seriously. He did not know whether Junior was just a "good" man or a "big" man. But after Junior had come with flying colors through the cross-examination by Walsh, the Lord of Oil was convinced that his son was really Big. John D. spoke of his admiration to acquaintances and demonstrated his faith by more practical methods. A few days after the Industrial Commission hearings closed, the elder Rockefeller placed in his son's hands outright ownership of a sufficient block of the thirty-four million dollars common stock of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company to give him control. This was the first appreciable instalment of more than $500,000,000 John D. has given his son.

Thus, in the fall of 1915, Junior went out to the mines as virtual owner. He stopped off at Cleveland for a final chat with his father. John D. gave him a free hand but reminded him: "Remember, millions for defense but not one cent for tribute." Junior continued his journey. Under the shrewd management of press agent Lee, he donned overalls, went down into the mines, sat at mess table with the men, slept in

their homes. Then, also following Lee's suggestions, he launched his arbitration committees, under which men and management met, in equal numbers, to settle disputes over the table.

These committees—the so-called "Republics of Labor"—have since been widely extended in other Rockefeller properties and have operated with a greater proportion of success than most other industrial panaceas. In the 1928 strike of coal miners in Colorado, it is worthy of note, the Rockefeller mutual-benefit pact successfully withstood militant assaults of the I. W. W.

Since 1915, John D. has shown increasing confidence in his son. He has even legally transferred his four residences to the latter, including the great Pocantico estate. The transfer may have been made to escape inheritance taxes, but I think not. However that may be, John D. is now a tenant of his son. Of course, the son would never turn his father out of doors but, with customary Rockefeller thoroughness, the deeds stipulate that John D. shall have the right to occupy all of the houses so long as he lives and also the right to lease them at his pleasure.

John D., Jr., has been a disappointment to

his father in one respect only; he has never been able to learn to play a passable game of golf. "Father and the professionals have not succeeded with me yet," says John D., Jr., ruefully. "However, if my money holds out, I hope eventually to play a pretty good game. Now I only know enough to hit the ball once every ten times, never to pick up a lost ball until it has stopped rolling, and to wear a snappy golf suit, not a gymnasium costume."

However, John D., Jr., gets plenty of exercise riding on the Pocantico bridle paths and skating on the pond. He is very proud of his skill on skates. At the slightest encouragement, on icy weekend afternoons at Pocantico, he will wind (always with deadly seriousness) through the mystic mazes of the Philadelphia twist, the figure eight, the spread eagle, and double grapevine.

Daily, when in town, he plays squash at the Whitehall Club or rides the electric horse in the Club gymnasium on the twenty-fourth floor of the Whitehall Building. He exercises solely to promote efficiency. The economic necessity of a sound body was borne in upon him in his thirtieth year when a temporary nervous breakdown forced him to spend five months in Southern France.

As a matter of health insurance, two years ago he erected for his six children, at Pocantico, a beautiful private playhouse and athletic field. It cost $500,000. The playhouse is built of native rubble stone. Like the family villa, the building looks up at the great mansion in which dwells John D., Sr. It contains a swimming pool, kitchen, and breakfast room, lounging rooms and dens, bowling alleys, music salon, billiard tables, and a dark room and developing chamber where the Rockefeller boys may indulge their hobby for photography. Among the many outdoor features are tennis and croquet courts and a baseball diamond.

Whether in town or country, the Rockefeller children have always led a simple, rigidly disciplined life. "Wealth hurts children when they get too much of it," assert John D., Jr., and his wife. Accordingly, their children have had to wait on themselves from babyhood. They never visited a theatre, even a motion picture show, until their mid-teens. At seven or eight each child received an allowance of thirty cents a week. Ten cents was for savings, ten cents for benevolence, ten cents for spending.

As a method of bringing each child to a realization of the fundamental principles of eco-

nomics, account books were provided. At the end of each week, John D., Jr., painstakingly audited the accounts. If they were correct and the money properly expended, the child received a bonus—otherwise a fine. The allowances were gradually increased. Still, rewards and demerits were given. At twenty-one the eldest child, Abby, received a dollar as weekly allowance for each year of her age. She purchased a car through money inherited from her grandmother, but when she got into trouble with the authorities for speeding, her twenty-one dollars a week was promptly cut as a punitive measure. The daughter (there are five boys) is the only one of the children who ever enjoyed a bit of a surreptitious fling. She is now twenty-five and the wife of David Meriwether Milton, a young lawyer. The other children are: John D., III, twenty-three, Princeton '29; Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller, twenty-one, Dartmouth '30; Lawrence, eighteen; Winthrop, seventeen; and David, thirteen.

During adolescent years the Rockefeller children were successfully kept in ignorance of the family's wealth. When fifteen, John D., III, was amusing himself with a very old and dilapidated rowboat on his father's place at

Seal Harbor, Maine. A native neighbor's boy happened along and turned up his nose. "Huh," he ejaculated, "why don't you get a motor boat?" John D., III, regarded the other with unfeigned astonishment. "A motor boat!" he exclaimed. "Gee whiz! Who do you think we are—Vanderbilts?"

John D., III, also, has been brought up to a rigid realization of Work, Duty, Godliness. Eventually, he is destined to take up the baton of his awesome grandsire.

IX

JOHN D., III, THE CLAN'S FUTURE CHIEFTAIN, AN INTIMATE PORTRAIT

JOE SIPPLEY is proprietor of a small restaurant on Nassau Street, Princeton, N. J. Joe is an Italian, friendly and smiling. He is not a citizen; he has been too busy supporting his family to learn to read and write a strange and difficult tongue. But he conducts a clean, reasonable little eating-house, and has endeared himself to every undergraduate, especially to freshmen. When father is late with the allowance, or funds are otherwise low, Joe will cash a check or extend credit.

One afternoon a tall youth, of serious mien, level gray eyes and attired in loose ready-to-wears, walked in and presented a check. Joe's pretty daughter, whom he put all the way through grammar school, was at the cashier's counter. She glanced at the boy (he was unmistakably collegiate) and at the check. One look at the latter, and then she froze.

She slipped into the kitchen and went into a

huddle with her father, mother and Giuseppe, potato-peeler and general handy-man. A moment later Joe burst from the kitchen and fairly ran toward the student standing quietly by the door. Waving the check beneath the undergraduate's nose, the restaurateur sizzled like seidlitz. Finally he exploded. Slapping himself upon the chest with his free hand, he exclaimed:

"Me, Joe, frien' all you fellows! Joe casha da check always for da Prince-boys. Soma-time I win; soma-time I lose. Once I casha da check signa by what-you-call-him, signa Georga da Washington. Once I casha da check signa by Julius Caesar. But I no so bigga fool as to casha dissa check signa by"—he looked down with infinite scorn—"signa by 'Johna D. Rockefeller'!"

Throughout this excited tirade the youth remained quiet, smiling a little. Perfectly cool, he reached for his check, tucked it back in his wallet, remarked with grace and ease, "All right, my friend, don't let the matter worry you," and strolled into Nassau Street.

The indignant restaurant man did not learn until some time later that the signature upon the bank draft for ten dollars was genuine, and that John D. Rockefeller, formerly of 26

Broadway, later of Tarrytown, Lakewood and Florida, had really signed the check and mailed it as a gift to one of his closest and most loved relatives. The latter was John Davison Rockefeller, III, the oil king's grandson and namesake, and a student at Princeton.

When he did learn the truth, Joe—the "freshman's friend" they call him at Princeton —clutched his heart and cursed his ancestors. But John D. Rockefeller, III, holds no spite. As I write, he is completing his senior year and is twenty-three. "I think Joe used pretty good judgment in not cashing Grandfather's check," says the third John D. "Shows how green I was in those freshman days to try such an apparently silly trick on so keen a business man as Joe."

Joe and John D., III, became good friends and often discussed with luscious joy the incident of the "suspicious" check. The episode, in fact, remains the most laughable anecdote in the repertory of each.

In a day not so very far distant, John D., III, will, in all likelihood, become the leading figure in America's eleven-billion-dollar oil industry. It may be his destiny to lead our battle for control of the world's oil fields—a battle in which

kings and countries are already merely pawns. Certainly he is destined to direct and continue the great Rockefeller benevolent trusts.

He is being prepared for both possibilities with the meticulous, machine-like care that distinguishes the astonishing clan of Rockefeller. For the two and one half months of his 1928 summer vacation he served as attache in the secretariat of the League of Nations. For the first time a salary was attached to his job of assistant in the information section. He expressed grateful satisfaction when the League paid him 1,000 Swiss francs, slightly under $200, for his summer's work. The youth lived in a modest Geneva pension and saved some of his salary.

In virtue, sobriety, strength, dislike of display, John D., III, is a true Rockefeller. He is a man full grown, in appearance, outlook, maturity. He has no intention of fleeing his heredity. Indeed, he couldn't if he would. But this young man, fortunately, possesses other and more human qualities that augur well for the historical verdict that will, eventually, be written of his tribe.

John D., III, Princeton '29, has a sense of humor, of gayety, of indubitably genuine, if controlled, pleasure. He is able to mix with

and win the confidence of his companions. There is no touch of the synthetic about him. His handshake, for instance, is not merely a gesture of polite social intercourse. If a friend slaps him on the back, John will slap right back. If some one he likes drops into his modest quarters in Princeton, 123 Henry Hall, with a uke, John has no objection at all to a bit of music, even if college-style.

He has been taught to abhor smoking and drinking and does, personally. But there are ash trays and cigarettes scattered about, and John's closest chum and roommate, Benson Blake, of Baltimore, enjoys a go at a pipe or a cigar. At the last Senior Prom, John escorted a girl, danced every number and begged with others for encores. John, III, is no "Christer of the campus" as the boys term a reformer, but is naturally serious-minded. He majored in economics.

Blake and Rockefeller occupy a typical Princeton suite of three rooms—study and two bedrooms, about the sort of suite a ten-thousand-dollar-a-year business man would select for his son. Henry Hall was built in 1924, one of the new collegiate-Gothic dormitories. There are many, many more expensive suites.

Let's drop in: The Blake-Rockefeller suite

is tastefully but not expensively furnished. There are casement windows opposite the door. A fireplace to the immediate left of the hall door. Doors in the right and left hand walls open into the bedrooms. The study contains two desks with lamps (where the chums perform their class tasks); a three-cushioned, overstuffed sofa in front of the fireplace; three chairs, one rocker of mahogany and two armchairs upholstered in leather; a piano lamp by one of the chairs; a low console phonograph; a cheap oak bookcase, which contains only yearbooks, class-books, text-books and a few random modern novels (best sellers). Above the fireplace is a framed etching of Abraham Lincoln. Additional etchings and English hunting prints decorate the other walls.

The study is in good taste. But one instantly remarks the absence of the conventional Princeton banner with class numerals over the fireplace, and the absence of any of the other pennants, slogans, Maxfield Parrishes or less reputable pictures or clippings with which many of the rah-rah element in every college cover their walls.

If a stranger dropped in to chat with young Rockefeller, the first thing he'd notice about the young man, rising six feet tall and rapidly

filling out, would be the complete absence of any evangelical personality associated with his grandfather of the dimes and his father of the Bible class. He is mild-mannered, a bit shy, but no whit lacking in virility. Ask him what books he is reading or has read, and he will grin and reply:

"None particularly. I have no special favorite author. I have read a number of what I call good books, darned good ones, but never have read one author more than any other."

"Come on, John, what's your favorite book? I won't even faint if you say the Bible or Shakespeare!"

Again that slow but self-certain grin. Then: "Nope, I can't think of any off-hand."

John D., III, was prepped for college at Loomis Institute in Windsor, Conn. At the very start he was dubbed "Gasolene Gus" and the expressive nickname stuck through the four years he spent at the school. The cost of tuition at Loomis is about half that of most other private schools of the same class. Young Rockefeller was not a brilliant scholar but showed strong leaning toward practical and administrative interests. He devoted much of his spare time to reading up on advertising and salesmanship. He served as business

manager of the Loomis student organ, the *Loomiscellany;* as member of the student council; and as secretary and vice president of the French Club.

When he graduated in 1925, his fellow graduates printed the following quotation from Francis Bacon on the page which recorded his school activities: "Virtue is like a rich stone, best plain set."

In his freshman year at Princeton he competed for membership on the business board of the *Daily Princetonian,* the student newspaper. He was elected, the first man of his class to be chosen. He was an active member of the business board for four years. He won the job by dragging in more ads than any other freshman, and he did this entirely without employing the prestige of the family name.

"When he came into my store," says one Princeton merchant who placed his first advertising in the *Princetonian* through young Rockefeller, "he introduced himself as an advertising agent from the college paper. He had a lot of figures on the purchasing power of the students and such like. I was impressed. He looked to me like a fellow who knew what he was talking about. So I gave him an ad. Didn't find out who he was for a year. Got

an idea that kid'll plow forward on his own steam."

John D., III's father and family knew nothing about these activities.

"If you believe in the thing you're selling and have enough persistence," remarked young Rockefeller, explaining his success as an advertising man, "you'll win out. I only spent eight hours a week soliciting ads, but I did enjoy meeting people. Advertising is a fine business. Shall I go into it permanently? No, guess not."

As a sophomore John was one of eight members of his class chosen to compete for the managership of the football team. This is perhaps the most sought-after job in college. Nominations of candidates are made in the early fall; twenty signatures and the countersign of the candidate are required for each nomination. Usually as many as twenty are nominated. Of these, eight are elected to enter the competition. Consequently, it is considered an honor even to get into the competition. The eight potential managers must appear in rotation at each football practice and game. They are kept busy running errands and doing odd jobs for the managers, coaches and players. The figure of Rockefeller, tall, slight,

brown-haired, was familiar in the Princeton football circle. He carried water, pumped up footballs, polished equipment and made himself generally useful. "Didn't win the job but I had lots of fun," grins Rockefeller, Third.

Also in sophomore year, during "Bicker Week," John joined Cap and Gown Club, one of the best of the eighteen organizations on Prospect Avenue. "Bicker Week" is the annual period in March when sophomores are elected to the upper class eating-clubs. His father wanted him to join one of the smaller clubs, but John went Cap and Gown because the majority of his friends were there.

In the "old days" (they seem very remote to Princeton boys, though actually only before July 1, 1927), Princeton undergraduates were permitted to have motors of their own. Almost every Cap-and-Gowner owned a car. But young Rockefeller was *not* among the two or three hundred students who had their own roadsters or sport phaetons.

At Princeton the campus religious organization is called the Philadelphian Society. John D., III, naturally gravitated to this fellowship. He volunteered to assist in Philadelphian activities during his freshman year. Rather hesitantly he gave his reasons to a friend: "My

family is in a position to give money without feeling it. I feel that my contributions to charity should be not in money, but in some practical service."

So, upon assignment from the Society, John went among the Greeks and Italians who worked in the kitchens at the University Commons and about the grounds. He went to boarding houses where the foreign born live, to Dorothea Hall where they are fed. He carried simple books on English grammar and pronunciation and painstakingly assisted his scholars in grappling with the intricacies of a strange tongue.

When the classes were small, with only two or three pupils, young Rockefeller carried on by the so-called natural method of simple conversation. When the classes became larger, he employed primers and readers such as those used in graded school.

At the beginning of his junior year, John D., III, was placed in charge of this part of the Philadelphian Society's work. This honor carried with it a position in the Cabinet, the undergraduate governing body of Philadelphian. Rockefeller then merely organized the activities of other volunteers. Also, he devoted part of two summers to work as a councilor in

the Society's summer camp for tenement boys at Bay Head, N. J. These jobs afforded him valuable contacts. Often men and boys whom he taught brought problems to him. If a dollar or two would help, he dug into his allowance, which was exceedingly slender.

The young man set forth his experiences in regular correspondence with his father and grandfather. But his steady buddy is Nelson, his brother. Nelson, a couple of years younger, is a junior at Dartmouth. Nelson is an athlete, a husky, chunky kid ready to fight at the drop of a hat—star half back on the varsity soccer team, and all that. During his freshman year the lordly sophs tried a little mild hazing on Nelse—made him collect shoes in the hall and polish them. That didn't feaze Nelson in the least. He and John and all the other Rockefeller children had been shining their own shoes for years. Said Nelse: "I'll show those stiffs I'm the best porter in Hanover. In Hanover? Why, I'm the best porter in all New England!"

Then the sophs recognized that Nelse was regular, and treated him gingerly. They showered the Rockefeller grandson with attentions. They invited him to "open houses" and inspected him for fraternity material. Nelse

replied by writing a typical Rockefeller letter to *The Dartmouth!* He denounced the hypocrisy of the system and suggested that "frat inspection calls" be limited to non-study hours.

From boyhood John and Nelson have been Siamesian in their friendship. In 1926 they went to England, traveling tourist third class. They returned at a cost of one hundred dollars each on the *American Trader* of the American Merchant Lines. Each carried a couple of handbags. There were but nineteen other passengers, westbound in late July. Nelse and John descended into the bowels of the ship, ascended the bridge with Cap'n Fish, as jolly a sea-dog as ever yarned over his brandy, joined deck games and parties, and mixed with everybody. In New York they carted their own luggage from pier to taxi. They had a helluva time.

They had just as much fun the following summer when their father paid their passage on the *Berengaria* as a reward for college work faithfully accomplished. They skylarked through Germany and spent a week in Geneva inspecting the workings of the League of Nations under the tutelage of Raymond B. Fosdick. The latter, a brother of the Rockefeller pastor, Harry Emerson Fosdick, is one of John

D., Jr.'s, right bowers in the Rockefeller Foundation.

John D., III, came into the world late on the evening of March 21, 1906, in the town house of his parents, 10 West Fifty-fourth street. His sister Abby had been born November 2, 1903. During the interval, both John D. Rockefeller and his son had been impatiently awaiting the arrival of a male heir presumptive to the greatest fortune in the world.

At that time a newspaper statistician calculated that if the Rockefeller billion remained intact and the new baby inherited all and expanded his possessions in true Rockefeller fashion, John D., III, at sixty would be worth something like $90,000,000,000,000. Figure that for yourself. I can't even pronounce it.

Such possibility, haply, has been averted. However, John D., III, I am certain, will be able to manage whatever responsibilities fall upon him. For this cool, Godly young man has inherited many of the qualities of the surprising individual who founded the family fortune and who, at ninety, still keeps a steady hand upon the helm.

X

JOHN D. AT NINETY

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER'S sense of humor is scarcely that of a Barrie or an Anatole France. But a well told story will delight him for weeks. He himself is an inveterate raconteur. One of his favorites is the story of the old Negro, arraigned in court on a charge of vagrancy, who gave his name as John D. Rockefeller. Scratching his grizzled poll in perplexity at the outburst of laughter, the old darky explained: "Yassah, dat's mah real name an' it's been a trial toe me all mah life, jedge yuh honah."

Another is the tale of the timid soul whose wife drove him under the bed with the blunt end of a broom. He peeked out and when she threatened further punishment, he said stalwartly: "You can't bulldoze me! So long as I've got the spirit of a man I'll take a peek."

John D. likes the one about the Virginia Negro who named his first born (a son) Weatherstrip because the boy was born "jes' befo' de war an' he sho' done keep me outa de

draft." But the oil king's pet yarn concerns a nervous woman passenger on a train who, as a climax to a hundred foolish questions, asked the conductor: "Conductor, why do you wave your hand when you want the train to start?" "Oh," replied the tormented man in uniform, "when I wave my hand that means get the hell out of here." Someone who overheard the conductor's tart answer warned him that the nervous woman was the wife of a director. "Phew!" exclaimed the conductor, "guess I better apologize." He paused at the woman's seat, took off his hat and began a fulsome apology. "She didn't say anything," narrates John D. "She just waved her hand!"

Occasionally, Rockefeller descends to employment of the lowly pun. Someone once sent him a newspaper cartoon showing him pouring oil and water into a machine from which came dollars. He looked at it smiling and remarked: "Now, wouldn't that rock-a-feller?" On another occasion a visitor noticed something bulging under the covering of the library table in Rockefeller's Cleveland home. It was pay day on the estate. John D. pulled back the cloth and exposed many packages of one, five and ten dollar bills, remarking: "We raise all

sorts of things here but I am best at raising greenbacks."

Not long ago this man of ninety, who revolutionized modern business, stood upon the enclosed porch that encircles his $3,000,000 mansion at Pocantico Hills and pressed electric switches. Instantly thirty acres of gardens and fountains, canals and cascades, brooks and grottoes, trees and terraces, pergolas and Grecian statues, sprang into multi-colored life.

As he created effects of indescribable beauty, playing upon the lights as a musician upon his keys, and, standing in the soft night overlooking his thousands of acres and the great moonlit sweep of the Hudson, the little shriveled-up man must have felt close to the infinite. But no revelatory expression crossed his countenance, ridged and hollowed like a bas relief map. He turned off the lights and went into the evening's diversions, attended by his son and other members of the family. To them he is hallowed. He never gives his genuine estimate of himself. "Just a man of figures." He repeats the phrase often and proudly.

I should like to be able to justify a slang phrase and write that John D. Rockefeller owns the first dime he ever made. That would

be in character but it would be inaccurate. He has a memory and a written record of the first dime he ever earned. He has shown his grandchildren the very spot where he earned it. But he admits, regretfully, he did not preserve that first dime.

However, he did think out a scheme many years ago to make people emphasize the value and treasure the possession of small coins. Accordingly, some 20,000 shining dimes and nickels have passed from his pocket into the hands of as many men, women and children.

In giving away these coins The Richest Man in the World has not merely been "presenting a little souvenir" to chance acquaintances. There is deeper significance and deeper psychology in the matter than that. John D.'s intimates say he has a two-fold purpose in bestowing the Decoration of the Dime: to inculcate the principles of saving and thrift, and to establish warmer personal relations with his fellows. Both objectives have been attained. People fashion amulets and watch charms of his bright coins. Hundreds have written that his small gift has turned their thoughts toward thrift and has become, in their particular households, a visible symbol of the necessity for saving.

These are beads in the rosary of Croesus, and he gloats over them. For he believes each bead betokens a deed well done and he sees himself eventually lifted up to the very gates of God by such strands.

What an institution this man has become!

Occasionally the public catches a glimpse of him—muffled, bent, with age-worn skin, dark glasses generally concealing the ice-blue eyes that gleam from sunken cheeks and skull bones. The casual observer, sighting him thus, might judge he was closely approaching the senile climacteric period of life. But no one who does not come into close contact with Rockefeller can possibly sense the fire, cold but intense, that burns within that mummified frame. It is his inner fire that enables this remarkable individual to fend off the forces of dissolution.

Casting about feebly for a summary of the man, I can think of no better estimate than a paradox: at nineteen John D. Rockefeller was old. At ninety, he is young. He has systematically and astonishingly *steinached* his spirit. With no natural inclinations in that direction, he has learned to develop and live joyously. Unquestionably this growth, whether real or synthetic, is his greatest triumph.

July 8, 1929, marks Rockefeller's ninetieth anniversary. Just as he determined at eighteen to become the richest man in the world, and succeeded, so he has determined to live on indefinitely upon an earth whose expansion he has so largely directed. This fine, factual mind has never known failure; and I, for one, would wager the price of a prophecy that he will be listening to a band playing music that is not slow on July 8, 1939.

John D., from what I have observed of him, will triumph as our most prominent centenarian because he has been able to force himself to return to the simplicities, in spirit as well as in his physical life. Many of our famous citizens are seeking longevity. But none of these candidates for the longer life have been forced to hurdle John D.'s handicaps. Terrific burdens have been placed upon this man because of his very position as progenitor of the age of machinery, consolidation, and huge industrial development in America. Universally execrated, broken physically and nervously, he was forced almost three decades ago to retreat behind stone walls, barbed wire fences, grilled iron gates.

Just one avenue of salvation opened before him: he had to face about sharply, yield over,

in part, the things that spelled chief interest for him and create a new spiritual, social and physical outlook. He succeeded; and life to him now is apparently a renaissance, almost a rhapsody.

Seemingly, the renascent Rockefeller is completely contented. He leads a perfectly balanced life. He sleeps eight undisturbed hours each night and for a few moments at short intervals during the day. He eats sparingly, but without restriction, of any dish he wants with the exception of the few which experience has taught do not agree with him.

He enjoys organ recitals, band concerts and vocal renditions of old hymns and favorite songs of his boyhood. He reads with absorption in three favorite books, studies certain selected private reports, and glances over two newspapers daily. He is an addict and something of an expert in two games of skill and chance—golf and a mathematical building game called Numerica.

He talks fascinatingly, but with no soaring of the imagination, of the days that are gone and keeps in very, very close touch with events in Wall Street that are likely to affect his holdings. Through his son, he has retained stock interest in some fifteen companies of the old

Standard group and is always a considerable subscriber (also through John D., Jr.) to new stock issues. He has several personal representatives at 26 Broadway and always commends them warmly when profits are netted from transactions entered into upon their advice. He never has and never will retire in a definitive sense.

John D. is the "Grandfather Confessor" to his children and grandchildren and likes to have them around him. He watches his health as you watch the mercury of your thermometer in zero weather. But he has dispensed with a personal physician and never displays the slightest outward concern about his physical condition.

Let's describe a typical day in his life. The setting is the huge Pocantico estate. He has retained three other homes—in New York City, Lakewood, N. J., and Ormond Beach, Florida. But he spends as much time in his peak-roofed mansion overlooking the Hudson as he does in the other houses combined. The other homes are adequately staffed and always awaiting their master, but Pocantico holds his deepest affection.

It is, then, 7 a. m. any morning from late April to early December. Rockefeller's valet,

John, enters the master's suite on the third floor and softly draws back the curtains. John has served him for ten years. John's predecessor went away to the war and did not return.

John D. is already stirring. He rises without effort and goes into his great bathroom with its weighing machine, needle showers and tub that is almost as large as a plunge. At 7:30 his morning ablutions are over and, with the valet's assistance, he dons a sack suit. John D. for years has been fussy about his wearing apparel. He owns as extensive a wardrobe as any society dandy—sixty suits and several hundred ties, for instance — and has very distinctive ideas about clothing and colors.

At eight, promptly, he steps into the electric elevator and descends to the first floor. The dining room faces east and north, catching the morning sun, and looks out upon the Circular Garden, in the center of which is a rich marble fountain, patterned after one by Donatello, in the Palazzo Pitti at Florence. From the dining table, one catches a glimpse of this fountain through a lane of cypress trees. "I have always hankered after a pleasant morning view," says John D. "I remember when I was hardly more than a boy I wanted to cut away a big tree that

interfered with the view from the windows of our dining room. Some of the family objected. My dear mother whispered to me that she thought there would be no complaint if the tree were removed some morning before breakfast and the family could see the view which the fallen tree revealed. So it turned out."

Awaiting Rockefeller in the hallway are Mrs. Fannie Evans, a cousin who took up the duties of housekeeper after the death of Mrs. Rockefeller in 1915. Also (probably) several house guests. All *must* appear at breakfast. Trays are never served in bedrooms at Kijkuit. The guests, as a rule, are relatives, officials of the great Rockefeller charity organizations, or ministers. There is usually at least one divine in the house, sometimes a Catholic priest, Father J. P. Lennon, of New York, an old friend and golfing companion.

Rockefeller greets the company cheerfully and leads the way in to breakfast. He sits at the table overlooking the Circular Garden (it is really stirrup-shaped) and says grace. The meal consumes an hour. The bent little man at the head of the table eats practically nothing but "samples" a tiny amount of everything. A drop of coffee, a spoonful of cereal, a forkful of egg, a bit of chop the size of a pea. He eats

very slowly, seeming actually to chew his liquids as well as solids. The total amount of food he consumes in one day would probably equal in bulk not more than two or three medium-sized sandwiches.

When the other diners have finished their meal, John D. motions to the butler. The latter leaves the room and in a moment a pleasant looking gentleman appears bearing three books. This is Rockefeller's secretary, Lester Davis. The books are the Bible; a compendium of poems and prayers containing an "uplift" message for each day; and a volume of the collected sermons of the Rev. Dr. Jowett.

Short selections are read from each of the three volumes. The reading is generally done by Davis or a guest. John D. focuses his entire attention upon these daily lessons and sometimes has a passage repeated. Then he retires to his study for the first of five daily rest periods. These come after each meal and following golf and motoring. He has so schooled himself that he is able to will himself to sleep for five or ten minutes if he feels the need of such invigoration.

Then he is ready for his morning paper. He reads or has read to him *The New York Times* in the morning, later *The New York Evening*

Post. He follows world events in which he is interested with great care. But the papers really tell him very little. He himself could publish the most interesting newspaper in the world! And each day he'd have a flock of beats.

For while the papers are speculating upon the health of a great diplomat or the possible overthrow of a foreign government, he has already been informed of latest developments through direct wires leading from Pocantico Hills to Standard Oil offices and, indirectly, to the remote places of the earth. There are over a hundred telephones at Pocantico, forty of them local, suburban and long distance lines.

Rockefeller does not use them much, but he is interested in market quotations and he likes to receive an advance digest of anything big that is going on in the world. He has never lost interest in finance. During the period we are describing he was very keenly interested in various deals of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. Through representatives, he advised the transaction by which the New Jersey Standard cut its capital cost by retiring $200,000,000 of preferred stock and floating a new issue of $120,000,000 in debenture bonds.

His information about this and other matters that interest him is invariably accurate.

An hour after breakfast John D. goes to his rooms and dons golf togs. He generally wears an old cap with side flaps; one or two sweaters (depending upon the weather), rough, loose-fitting and with floppy collars; long trousers; dark golf shoes. He always wears gloves.

At Kijkuit, he walks out of a basement door, through the Golf Garden (so called because it is next to a lawn upon which he practices) and to the first tee. Until last year he played either eight or ten holes at Pocantico because the eighth and tenth greens are nearer the house than the ninth; nine holes at Lakewood; and only eight at Ormond, because there the eighth green is at the roadside and his car can more readily pick him up. Now he plays but six holes a day, finishing, though, at the same spots by cutting across lots. "I feel strong enough to play eighteen holes," explains John D., "but moderation is the proper prescription for a young man of my age."

Physically, golf is the biggest thing in John D.'s life. He is not a star player but he is by no means a dub. He has made a study of the game, understands its principles thoroughly, and comes as close to being a golf bug as

anyone. Over a stretch of several weeks this spring he averaged a trifle over thirty for six holes. Don't let anybody tell you that's bad golf for a man of ninety who weighs less than one hundred pounds. The Rockefeller bag contains more clubs than that of the average golfer. He has two drivers and two brassies of different weights. The brassie is his favorite club. He uses it frequently when others counsel an iron. His principle is: "Always use the heavier club."

In his tee shots he develops medium trajectory. In approaching he knows how to run 'em up as well as pitch 'em on to the green. He always goes straight for the flag, as golfers say, not content merely to dribble on to the green. He has a big rake-like putter and sweeps the ball into the hole. I saw him take four putts once, but he seldom requires more than the conventional two.

His game averages between "even fives" and "even sixes" per hole. He has gotten many "birdies" (one stroke under par) but no "eagles" (two under par) during his golfing career. He realizes his limitations, knows he can never hope to drive better than a good woman's ball and seldom tries to press.

The prettiest attribute of his game is its

direction. He loses not more than three balls a year. And he can tell exactly under what circumstances each was lost and whether the fault was his or his caddy's. A house guest at Pocantico phoned me once and ruefully announced: "I just played a round with Mr. Rockefeller. I am a total loss! He beat me seven up in ten holes. I drove six balls into the woods. He was right on a trolley wire all the way!"

John D.'s grip and stance are not perfect. He holds his right thumb straight down the shaft of his club. His left toe is a bit too near the line of flight. But he gets results. Lifelong habits of economy are evident even in his golf. He wastes no energy in a preliminary swing and refuses to waggle his club back and forth while addressing the ball. In fact he doesn't waggle at all—just steps up and socks, for good or evil. Every two or three holes he pulls a piece of chalk out of his pocket and liberally smears the face of his driver.

"Helps to hold the ball," he explains. "Also it lets me know whether I am succeeding in hitting the ball where I want to—just below center."

His swing is a good, rounded, three-quarter affair, remarkable in a man of his age. When

he connects fairly the pill is off on a 150-yard ride. Like most golfers he displays exultation when he has gotten off a good shot. When members of his foursome applaud him, he generally replies with a grin: "Oh, good enough for me."

When he soaks one square down the middle, he hums happily to himself or does the funny little half-Charleston already described. His steady golf pals are Mrs. Ira Warner and General Adelbert Ames. The former frequently visits him at Pocantico and Ormond. General Ames lives at Ormond on the opposite bank of the Halifax River. The general is two and one-half years John D.'s senior and often twits the oil king when the latter quits on the sixth green.

One evening at Ormond a small Negro ran home breathlessly and broke the news that he had been engaged to caddy the following morning for The Richest Man in the World. He visualized a gold piece at least. He was disappointed. He received the union rate for caddying but had the misfortune to lose a ball and was docked ten cents for his carelessness.

John D.'s favorite caddy at Ormond is a bright little piccaninny named Harmon. One day the Oil King drew Harmon aside and said:

"My boy, let me give you some advice. Don't buy anything you can do without. Save your money. Be punctual. Form good habits."

The little darky's eyes saucered.

"Yassah," he gulped, "yassah, Ah certa'ly follows what yo' says, sah."

Rockefeller makes his only regular public appearance of the year during his three months at Ormond. People come to the golf course in sightseeing buses to look him over and receive his dimes. He has become a town character. Last winter he greeted everyone he saw for a week by whistling a tune that was running in his mind and asking them to identify it. No one could and he never found out what it was.

Someone began calling him "Neighbor John" a couple of years ago and John D. glowed. Now, each Christmas, he throws open his rambling, unpretentious home, the Casements, to residents of Ormond Village and plays Santa Claus. Whenever possible, he has thirteen-year-old David Rockefeller, youngest son of John D., Jr., down for the holidays. Little David has a clear, fresh voice and just dotes on singing hymns. John D. loves to hear him, and together, each Christmas-tide, they lift their voices in "Holy Night, Silent Night" and

other touching Christmas carols. Last Christmas some of "Neighbor John's" guests from the village were so affected that they wept from sheer joy. John D. bade them dry their eyes and then distributed little trinkets to the children from his huge Christmas tree.

Intriguing as is the temptation to continue the tale of "Neighbor John", let's return to our narrative of a typical day at Pocantico:

John D. returns from his golf game by noon. He changes again into a business suit, rests for a few minutes, handles whatever matters of business have been brought to his attention, and is ready for luncheon at 1:30. This is the "heaviest" meal of the day. He is likely to consume two or three spoonfuls of a favorite soup, dip into several vegetables, and nibble at a small leaf of lettuce with a few drops of olive oil. He still holds to the belief, as we have pointed out, that olive oil is a good unguent for the aged. He may top off the meal with a bit of cheese. "Once I thought cheese a deadly burden upon the stomach," says John D. "Now I recognize it as a healthful food, in moderation."

Again, our rejuvenated invalid spends an hour over a meal the average person would

down in three gulps. "I never leave the table right after a meal," he says, "always sit for a time. It is not good for the digestion to hurry. I have disciplined myself to eat sparingly and find it pays."

After luncheon, John D. again rests for a few minutes. Then he attends to matters connected with the management of his dukedom (and he overlooks not even the smallest item); talks perhaps with his son or a representative in New York; glances over memoranda or reports of his outside affairs—reports considered important enough for his attention—and at 3:30 sharp goes motoring.

Often he motors for two hours. Even while pleasure bent, he likes to cover ground. Thirty-five miles an hour is the minimum speed that will satisfy him. Over the great boulevards traversing the Florida Peninsula, he travels at a faster clip. These imposing motor-ways were largely developed by his old partner, Henry M. Flagler. "Henry did a great job in Florida," asserts John D. "Think of pouring out all that money on a whim. But then Henry was always bold."

John D. likes scenery, but is not a born naturalist. Though a country boy, he never wandered about the woods nutting, stealing birds'

eggs, hunting woodchucks. He knows a great deal about flowers and trees, but even to this day catches himself thinking of them in terms of possible usefulness: honey, paper pulp, maple sugar.

On his motor jaunts, he often comes across trees that he covets. He carefully notes the location and a few days later a poorly clad, farmer-like fellow appears and makes a bid. The owner, whether he refuses or accepts the offer, has not of course the slightest inkling that his splendid oak or maple is purposed to embellish the velvety expanse of Pocantico!

John D.'s fondness for fast traveling is a trait apparently handed down to his pet granddaughter, Abby Rockefeller Milton. In fact, I am not at all certain Abby's former occasional tangles with the traffic police were not due to an inherited taste for "getting there quickly". Both Abby (friends call her "Babs") and John D. have a positive aversion for "slow-poking through life". The oldest child of the Rockefeller Juniors assuredly does not inherit a thirst for speed from her parents.

But "Babs" Milton's grandfather, with whom she is a favorite, delights in moving as fast as the law and the elements of safety permit. Invariably, John D. times his trips to town and

often when he steps into the big semi-open car at Pocantico, he roguishly addresses his chauffeur, watch in hand:

"Phillips, we got to town Monday in one hour and seventeen minutes. Let's see what we can do today."

Phillips' grinning response, as he touches his cap, indicates thorough knowledge that his distinguished boss wants him to choose sparsely trafficked roads. Phillips and the other Rockefeller chauffeurs are careful, mature men selected for their expertness in handling cars. But, occasionally, they fail to realize that their powerful, perfectly mechanized engines are pushing them above the limits of speed permitted even in the open country.

When the speeding proclivities of Babs Rockefeller got her into a police court mix-up a few years ago, "Grandpop" was the first to comfort her. He wrote an encouraging little note. And when she visited him next he told her, with many a chuckle, how one of his chauffeurs, not so long before, had "barricaded" himself in the ample Pocantico garage to avoid a summons.

A new and zealous young motorcycle cop had timed the Rockefeller car, in which the Potentate of Pocantico was the only passen-

ger, and had trailed it to the very gates of the estate.

"The officer wanted to arrest everybody on the place," cackled Grandpop. "He calmed down only when he learned we were first offenders and unwitting offenders. Then he pardoned us. But the chauffeur had locked himself in the garage!"

Babs Rockefeller travels fast for excitement. Her grandfather was schooled to fast motion for efficiency's sake. John D.'s theory, from the time he purchased his first fast trotter, has been: "The sooner I can arrive at a given destination, the sooner I can accomplish the purpose that has led me there." The most strenuous financial effort John D. ever made was dependent upon speed. In the early days of the Standard Oil opportunity came to purchase a large business. A considerable number of hundreds of thousands of dollars had to be raised, in cash not securities. "I received the message at noon and drove from bank to bank," says John D., "asking each president or cashier, whomever I could find first, to get ready for me all the funds he could possibly lay hands on. I told them I would be back to get the money later. I rounded up all of our banks in Cleveland, made a second journey to

get the money, and kept going until I secured the necessary amount. With this I was off on the three o'clock train and closed the transaction."

Shortly before her marriage to young David Milton, Babs Rockefeller was aided by her grandfather in persuading her father, Rockefeller, Jr., to lift his hitherto stern ban against her motoring. The young Miltons promptly purchased an $8,000 car out of their combined personal income of $23,000. The motor was a powerful streamline, American-made machine of battleship gray.

John D. knew of the couple's ambition to take the car abroad with them on their honeymoon, knew also the young people's pockets were not lined with gold. So, at the conclusion of the wedding ceremony in May, 1925, (during the recital of the Lord's Prayer, John D. wiped his eyes time and again) grandpop drew Abby to one side and pressed a bit of paper into her moist hand.

That evening, after the wedding fans had been eluded successfully, several chums joined the Miltons in a private apartment at the Hotel Plaza for a wedding supper. These intimates, strange to say, included some well-known figures of stage and screen: Marilyn Miller,

Walter Catlett and others. In her heart, Babs had never subscribed to the strict tenets of her parents and she had witnessed (surreptitiously it must be admitted) a bit of life. Hence, describing some of the wedding presents to Miss Miller, Mr. Catlett and others, Babs exclaimed:

"The gifts were splendid but Dave and I need a little jack ('jack' is a flapper phrase for gold). Do you know, people, only one person was thoughtful enough to give us a check—Grandfather. An understanding old dear! He knew we were broke and he knew I am just dying to buy one of those beautiful French cars that do a mile in less than nothing! Grandfather has promised to ride with me when we get back."

John D.'s check was large enough not only to purchase the beautiful car of Babs' dreams but also to finance the honeymoon trip.

Again to return to John D.'s day! Motoring, as a rule, consumes two hours of his afternoon. Then comes the usual ten-minutes rest, a brief session with his secretary, another talk or two over the phone with his son or a representative, and he is ready to dress for dinner. He always wears formal dinner clothes, a habit

of years, whether he is dining alone with Mrs. Evans or whether there are a dozen guests.

Dinner is served promptly at 7:30. For the master of the house it is perhaps the lightest meal of the day. But again a full hour is required to consume the tiny grains of food he permits himself. A short rest while the table is being cleared in the great dining room, with its heavy, simple, old-fashioned furniture. Then comes the evening's chief amusement.

A long life of devotion to pietistic principles excludes all thought of card playing or gambling from the mind of John D. Rockefeller, thought, of course, he has lost and won many nickels from Gen. Ames and others on the golf course. Somewhere in his soul there must be a lingering weakness for games of chance. For he passes most evenings, between dinner and bedtime, with an interest that never flags, in a parlor game consisting of four different colored sets of fifty-two counters each. These counters are numbered from one to thirteen inclusive; there are four of each number.

The game is called Numerica. It could be accomplished with four ordinary poker decks, colored red, blue, yellow and green, but that would be card playing and Rockefeller has never touched a card in his life! So the origi-

nator of Standard Oil sits and deals—no, that's the wrong word!—distributes sets of the little square counters. Then he shuffles his own discs, draws numbers at random, and calls them off.

The object of the game is to build four stacks of consecutive numbers from 1 to 13. One must be careful to avoid "shutting in" smaller by larger numbers. It is possible to score a count of 52 in one round of the game. A moderately good player makes the maximum count one time out of three. John D. is so expert at shifting and building that he has been known to make several perfect scores in succession.

When he makes his 52, John D. titters as joyously as he did sixty years ago over the purchase of an important rival refinery. These evenings, when he wins the round at Numerica, Rockefeller gloatingly transfers a shining buffalo nickel from the right pocket of his dress waistcoat to the left. The left pocket holds his "winnings". And though no gambling can be tolerated in the Rockefeller household, the oil king invariably bestows a five-cent reward upon the winner!

Half a dozen or more games have generally been played by 10:30 when John, the valet, appears, to remind Rockefeller of bed, and it

is a poor evening that finds John D. winner of less than half the games played by the company. The Numerica expert walks cheerily to the elevator, mounts to his suite and is peacefully slumbering by eleven.

Within a very limited circle, John D. likes to cast back upon his business career. Those in intimate touch with him say that if he were carving out his great fortune today he would follow Henry Ford's example of distributing a portion of his wealth while he was actually accumulating. He has watched with wonderment Ford's attainment of popular esteem while piling up hundreds of millions for himself and family. He does not quite understand the vagaries of this social phenomenon, though he is a great admirer of Ford and has followed the latter's career with intense interest. He subscribes thoroughly to the Ford system of high wages and short hours, believing that it stimulates production.

Roughly, Rockefeller and his son have given away $750,000,000. The principal charities are: $183,000,000 to the Rockefeller Foundation endowed "to promote the well being of mankind throughout the world"; the General Education Board, $129,000,000, to assist col-

leges in increasing their endowments; the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, $74,000,000, to promote the welfare of women and children; and to the University of Chicago, $50,000,000. In addition he endowed the Rockefeller Institute, devoted exclusively to medical research, for $10,000,000 and also gave an immense sum to increase teachers' salaries throughout the United States.

The Spelman Memorial recently merged with the Foundation. The combined assets of the two institutions, based upon market value of their stock and bond holdings, land and buildings, equipment, etc., reach the staggering total of $313,173,762. The figures furnish a rather good index of John D.'s prescient investing vision.

Of course, it is impossible for the donor to keep in close touch with details of administration of these funds. John D., however, has surprising knowledge of what is going on. Sometimes he astonishes Dr. George Vincent or other directors of the various Rockefeller endowments by the nature of his questions when the officials accept his hospitality over the week-end.

There was a time when clouds of depression

swept over Rockefeller. These gloomy spells were particularly noticeable when his wife, his brother William and his friend, John D. Archbold, died. Now he looks upon death as calmly as one watches an autumn leaf fluttering to earth. Thus, three years ago, he took the passing of his old crony, Dr. Biggar, the man who forced him to drop active business.

"I don't let anything bother me," he says, "I keep cheerful. It is true that I am saddened now and then by the death of an old friend (I have sent condolences to more than a hundred old associates and employes) but I make new friends and people are very kind."

It is noticeable that John D. more and more cultivates acquaintance with young people. He seems to shy at forming new and deep friendships with the old—perhaps he wants to spare himself the shock of surviving them.

Occasionally he has an organist out from New York to play upon the magnificent instrument at Kijkuit. Another of his favorite grandchildren, Fowler McCormick, frequently goes to Pocantico to play the organ. On these evenings the Oil King abandons his passion for Numerica and sits wrapped in delight as old-fashioned songs and old-fashioned hymns caress his ears. At Princeton young McCor-

mick led the Triangle Orchestra and he is now an excellent musician.

To a greater extent each year, John D. enjoys family gatherings. Sometimes he is a-flow with reminiscence. Then the younger grandchildren listen, wide-eyed, when he describes how boys in his childhood were awakened by the sound of woodchoppers' axes at four o'clock of winter mornings; how they rose by lantern light and heard brittle snow squealing under sled runners.

He is fond of preaching thrift and religion through homely parables. The parables are not "snappy stuff" but have the rugged appeal of "Poor Richard". When young Winthrop Rockefeller (now seventeen and a student at Loomis Institute) was in short trousers, Grandpop used to tell him the story of a little boy's dream:

"There was once a little boy who did not like things as they were. He dreamed one night that he had made a world where there were no Sunday schools. He thought he liked this world. He thought in his sleep it was a beautiful place. But soon he began to miss something. There was something lacking. He took the matter to heart. Somebody asked the little

boy if he had made that world. 'Yes,' he answered tearfully, 'but I'll never do it again.' "

This is one of his favorite parables. He used it when a young man teaching Sunday school in Cleveland. I don't know what impression it made on Winthrop, but the latter assuredly approved of one habit of his grandfather. He loved to collect Grandpop's dimes! When he was the merest tot he used to run to John D., hold out his hand and lisp: "Grandpop, I've got a great big kiss for you." Grandpop got his kiss and Winthrop invariably got his dime. "That boy will make his way in the world," John D. was accustomed to remark after each such incident. The dimes Winthrop kissed out of Grandpop bulked vastly larger than his allowance. Perhaps the lad's motive was slightly ulterior!

Except for the books and papers I have mentioned, John D. does no reading. He has practically no knowledge of general literature, little appreciation of art, no indulged weaknesses, no pet luxuries. With increasing years, he has grown more liberal in his religious and social views. He is an intense disbeliever in divorce, for instance, yet is extremely fond of Harold F. McCormick, who was divorced some

years ago from his youngest surviving daughter, Edith.

He believes very firmly in a personal God and a "permanent" hereafter, where the good will be rewarded and the wicked punished. He is quietly positive his own good deeds will be recognized when the roll is called up yonder. He is sure the Golden Gates will be flung wide to him. Though apparently unworried over the future, he, like most of us—saint and sinner alike—is determined to remain on this sphere as long as possible.

His philosophy is completely summed up in a five-line verse he attempted on his eighty-sixth birthday:

"I was early taught to work as well as play,
My life has been one long, happy holiday;
Full of work and full of play—
I dropped the worry on the way—
And God was good to me every day."

John D. is passionately fond of Pocantico Hills. He has spent millions upon millions, certainly twenty, perhaps forty, upon Pocantico. His payroll has averaged $30,000 a month for twenty-five years. When he was told by Dr. Biggar in 1899 to slow down his pace or

die, he threw himself into the pastime of acquiring a great estate. He found the work an outlet for tortured nerves.

He built Kijkuit, the great manor house, with a view to light, air, beauty and comfort. He wanted the house constructed in such a way that he could be certain to obtain light in his favorite rooms at such hours as he needed it. To this end he ordered a small, boxlike structure to be built and placed upon a turntable on the center of Kijkuit Hill. Ingeniously arranged mechanism made it possible for Rockefeller, seated in this boxlike affair, to turn it about by means of levers. After much experimenting he composed a time table. This was the result of many days spent in the temporary structure. By the time the table was completed Rockefeller had learned when the sun would shine into each room. The time-table was based upon his own daily scheme of life.

For instance, he wanted light in his dining room in the morning and at noon. The only time he insisted upon having light in his den or office was between two and three in the afternoon. He wanted his own bedroom dark between three and four in the afternoon, the

hour in which he then took his only daytime nap.

The architects followed this plan faithfully in building the house. Rockefeller gave personal attention to a thousand other improvements and details, and Kijkuit is a flawless country home, set upon a flawless estate.

In his lovely hill-top palace, this "man of figures" sits awaiting the call to another Palace. He is serenely confident the mansion that has been reserved for him in the sky will make Kijkuit look like a laborer's hut!